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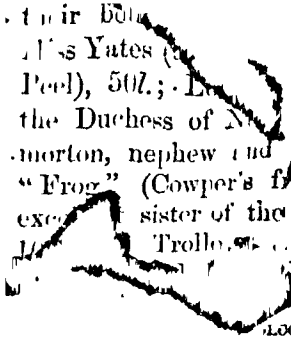


S AND LIFE

ELL MITFORD.

SECOND SERIES.

LETTERS TO MISS HARRISON—*continued.*

Jan. or Feb. 1843.

The accompanying papers will speak for themselves. I think that I told you the story of Messrs. ——'s conduct, who, after undertaking that I should have the reserved copyright of my Tales in the "Tableaux;" that is to say, that I should have the privilege of publishing them on my own account, as soon as the sale of the annual volumes was over, sold, or made over, or assigned—or all three—to three different parties, that selfsame copyright; so that when I had myself made an agreement with Mr. Colburn for three volumes of Tales, I found that they were republishing in monthly parts, that there was no use in going to law with persons so situated. This, and the terribly expensive and lingering nature of my dear father's last illness, occasioned the debts; and I have just this pension—bread and no more! It is proposed by some of my friends here that the county magistrates shall re-

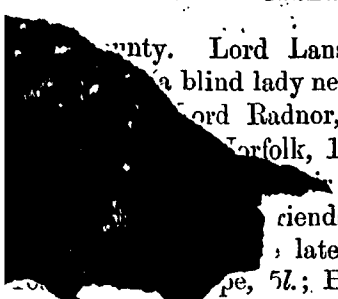
morialise the county members to petition, 1843.
Peel for an increase of pension; a[illegible]nest thanks
that any good you can do m[illegible] Kenyon, who
I trouble you, therefore, w[illegible], and Mr. Serjeant
papers.* Two of my frien[illegible] me at his house) the
50*l.* each, and a third 50*l.*[illegible] Lansdowne sent their
the "Times" and the "Mo[illegible]—(the Mar[illegible]ff of
advertisements gratis; and w[illegible], I rea[illegible]
people in Berkshire, and a[illegible]
London, to receive subscript[illegible]

If I had gone out of the country I should have asked Mr. Harrison to give me the great favour of his name. The Mr. Moore is the Tom Moore, and most kind volunteer on his part. I know that you will do for me all you can. We have been waiting for one name, to my great annoyance, for I am longing to have the advertisements fairly corrected. At present not a day passes without some good friend or other proffering some great suggestion.

Feb. 27th, 1843.

Accept, my dear young friend, my very sincere and hearty congratulations on this approaching marriage. In the midst of this joyous business you will not, I know, forget your less fortunate friend. I am sure that you will be glad to hear that the subscription proceeds favourably. I know of above 500*l.*; and the names are such as for rank, talent, and literature, to confer honour on the object of

* Proposals for the subscription, which, as will subsequently be seen, was originated by Mr. Albinus Martin.—C.



nty. Lord Lansdowne has given 50*l.*; a blind lady nearly related to Sir Robert ord Radnor, 25*l.*; Mr. Walter, 25*l.*; orfolk, 10*l.*; Sir Robert Throck- of Sir John and Lady riends), 10*l.*; Miss Fox, the late excellent Lord Holland, pe, 5*l.*; Horace Smith, 5*l.*; James Morier, 5*l.*; Mr. Kenyon has collected 70*l.*; Mrs. Cockburn (the Mary Duff of Lord Byron—his first love), 40*l.* The Duke of Bedford, Lord Sidmouth, and Mr. Moore have all subscribed, and many others, most eminent in every way. I am sure, my dear young friend, that you will do what you can to promote the subscription, the rather as I fear there is no chance of an increase of pension—Miss Jane Porter's friends having been met with a flat denial. Lord Nugent would probably do something. However, I leave this entirely to your own kindness and excellent judgment. Dear Miss Barrett, whose health is better, has a volume ready, but no bookseller will incur the risk of publishing poetry. Moxon says that he has lost by every one except Alfred Tennyson; to be sure the exception proves a growing taste for high poetry, for I think his three lovely volumes the most delicious that have appeared for many years. Indeed I know nothing in modern days equal to "Mariana," the "Sleeping Beauty," and "Locksley Hall." Do read them, if you have not yet become acquainted with them. Macaulay's "Lays of Rome" are also fine—stirring as the sound of a trumpet—but not equal to Tennyson.

March 12th

Accept, dearest Miss Harrison, my ear[redacted] for your great kindness. Except M[redacted] has given 50*l.*, and collected 100*l.* [redacted] Talfourd, to whom (having [redacted] Duke of Devonshire and Lord I[redacted] contributions, and Mrs. Cockburn[redacted] Lord Byron, his first love)—you a[redacted] the most successful of my many kind friends. Kinder than you none can be; and I rejoice to owe this great benefaction to one whom I most love and admire. You will be glad to hear that the subscription goes on well; 940*l.* have been received at the different banks, and I have heard of 300*l.* more, not yet paid in. The thing is still going on, too. I received, only yesterday, 21*l.*, from Charles Boner, and the same sum from Mr. Rogers and the Queen Dowager; and the inhabitants of many towns, where I have not a single acquaintance, are making collections, and managing them themselves. This is very gratifying; so are the names of those from whom I have received money, besides those abovementioned. The Duke of Bedford, the Duchess of Norfolk, Lord Radnor, Spencer, Fitzwilliam, Sidmouth, and Redesdale; Joanna Baillie, Maria Edgeworth, Mrs. Trollope, Mr. Moore, and many others of equal rank, talent, and character. *Your* contributions are worthy of this copartnery. I have heard much of Mr. E—— from my dear friend Miss J——, who has the honour of being his relation. Say how sincerely I feel his kindness. Next month, if this affair be over by that time, I think of going for a week to Bath, which I have never seen, and

thence I shall proceed into Devonshire, before settling here—for *here* I think I shall settle, in a cottage, the next door but one of this, a great deal cheaper, and opening into the same garden, which does not belong to this house, but has been purchased for me by an affluent friend—purchased by *him*, I mean, and most kindly assigned for my use.

March 26th, 1843.

I cannot thank you enough, my ever dear and kind friend, for your constant goodness to me. To be remembered at all by you at such a moment is no small compliment; and your interest has been exerted in a way not only profitable but most gratifying, inasmuch as your contributors, like so many of my other benefactors, are of a sort, from their own character, to reflect honour on the object of their bounty? Did I tell you—I think so—that the debts were all paid? Above 1,300*l.* have been received by the banks named in the circulars, and I know of a hundred or two more, and hear (as in your case) of kind contributors every day. Convey, I entreat you, my earnest thanks to all parties. I cannot tell you how deeply I feel their generous kindness, and your exceeding goodness. Did I tell you that my good old friend, Mrs. Opie, has been taking the same kind trouble at Norwich, and with great success. Mr. Kenyon, too, has collected 100*l.*, and contributed 50*l.*—20*l.* of the first sum being the donation of Mr. Rogers. We have Joanna Baillie, too, and Maria Edgeworth, Mrs. Trollope, Mr. Mil-

man, Mr. Morier, Mr. Horace Smith, Mr. Talfourd, Mr. Moore, and a host of other poets and friends, besides Lords Lansdowne, Northampton, Radnor, Spencer, Fitzwilliam, Sidmouth, Redesdale, the Dukes of Bedford and Devonshire, the Bishop of Durham, the Archbishop of Dublin, Lady Dacre, Lady Byron, Lady Francis Egerton, and many more, of the highest cultivation and benevolence. I ought not to have omitted the Queen Dowager. In short, I question if ever a list exhibited more names of real distinction; and I am deeply humbled, as well as touched, when I read their names, and wonder how I have deserved half their goodness.

Bath, May 8th, 1843.

Your very interesting and affecting letter followed me here. I cannot thank you enough for your goodness. Either of the Reading banks (Messrs. Simonds and Co., King Street, Reading, or Messrs. Stephens and Blandy, Market Place, Reading) would receive the money; or, if London be more convenient, it might be forwarded to Messrs. Willis and Co., but I don't know the precise address, being from home, and not having brought my circulars, and therefore the Reading banks would be safer, if not very inconvenient, or I shall be back in a month or six weeks, and then the money might be sent to me. I arrived here very ill, but am getting better, and only overwhelmed by friends and kindness. I think that I have seen, upon an average, from fifty to sixty people, most of them new people, every day, and

each drags me hither and thither: amongst them, however, are some very interesting;—but we shall meet, and I shall tell you, which is far better than writing. I am going, now, up to Prior Park, to Vespers. I spent the whole of last Friday there, and I was so charmed with the place and the people, Bishop Baines and his secretary, that I cannot resist going, to confirm the impression and increase my acquaintance with these very interesting persons. On Tuesday I go to Clifton for a week (No. 11, Sion Row, Clifton, Bristol, will be my address), where I already seem to know more people than a fortnight ago I knew at Bath, so that the same course will probably recur. Certainly I have seen much that is worth the journey—the new steamship, the "Great Britain," over which I was escorted by the chief engineer; Chatterton's fine old church; Mr. Landor's pictures, and Mr. Barker's. I am going to-morrow to Mr. Beckford's. In the midst of all, it would be strange if I did not strongly feel the sad cloud that has fallen over your happy family. Condole for me with your dear sister, on her ill-health; but say that I have heard of many recoveries, although they have taken time.

(About) June, 1843.

Be quite sure that if I can make out a visit to you for a day, I will; but I am still in all the turmoil of arranging my poor cottage, which is not finished, or nearly finished. Dear Mrs. P—— talked of the amusement of furnishing a house. Doubtless, to

those who have only to drive to an upholsterer, and show their taste, and give their orders, it is merely an amusement; but I am forced to go to brokers and cheap drapers, and make up my purchases myself, so that really the bodily labour is very great, and my life for the last month has been more like that of a linendraper's foreman, or an upholsterer's journeywoman, than anything else. I think, however, that you would like it: the neat and clean and changed appearance of all things, and the total absence of all cottage affectations, queer trelliswork, stupid verandas, and other tea-gardenish affectations. I do hope that, some day or other, you will come and see a good work, in which you and yours have had so much to do; for I can never look at my comfortable nest without feeling the tears spring into my eyes, as I think of the generous benefactors to whose bounty I owe all its snugness.

June 22nd, 1843.

Owing to an unexpected visit from an Irish damsel, on her way from France, I have been unable until this evening to ascertain the safe arrival of the magnificent subscriptions which you have so kindly collected, and did not like to write until I had fully ascertained their safety. Make, my dear young friend, my most grateful and respectful thanks for all, especially to your own excellent people, and to all who bear the name of Evans, of whom I have heard all that makes their notice in every way gratifying. Thank you, a thousand and a thousand times! How

is your dear sister? A sister of Miss Edgeworth was cured of spine complaint in a very bad stage, by Mr. King, of Clifton, who married an elder sister of the authoress. I know Mr. King, and his daughter Zoe, one of the most charming persons in the world. I call her the Good Fairy. I do assure you, my dear friend, that this is worth thinking of. Mr. King is a very skilful surgeon, and very safe; no empiric, no adventurer;—and the cure was so complete, that the lady is now a healthy wife and mother. Mr. King himself is a most interesting man,—a German, but settled in England for forty years, and universally respected. I became acquainted with him in my late trip, but have known of this and similar cases for many years. As I said before, *think of this.* When neglected or let alone, it becomes fixed in the habit, and brings on all sorts of aches and pains.

Have you seen Mr. Horne's fine epic poem, "Orion," price one farthing? It is very difficult to come by, but of great beauty. Oh, I do hope to get to you, my dearest friend.

August 7th, 1843.

First let me thank you, my ever dear young friend, for your unfailing kindness. The half-note arrived in perfect safety, and I have to entreat you to convey to your aunt, Mrs. G——, and my other liberal benefactors, my sincerest thanks. For *you* I have no words half strong enough: you must be content with the truest feelings of affectionate gratitude. Next I must say, with the sincerest

sympathy, how deeply I feel for your dear sister's sufferings. People do recover—quite—completely; nay, they recover very frequently when the patients are so young, and *that* is the best consolation; but still, to see so much pain in a beloved sister must be a grievous trial. However, I am quite sure that your cares and your society are the very things to lighten that pain; and there again is comfort of the most enduring kind. And what a consolation that she is still with and of you; not passed into another family; you could in that case hardly have helped suspecting that, had she remained single, the affliction would not have fallen on that fair young head, or at all events not so heavily.

I met last week, at a grand wedding, a friend of yours, who, on being introduced to me, claimed me as a friend through *our* friendship. He said that your father had preached for him a magnificent sermon for his schools; and of you he spoke—just exactly as I liked to hear. But his account (one of some weeks old) gave me a more hopeful view of Miss Margaret's case. I can understand that your excellent father took the happiest view of it, and spoke with that cheerfulness which men like him put on not to sadden others; and I earnestly trust that his report will still come true. I did not see much of Mr. Fox, being not very well, and getting off as soon as I could after the *dejeûner*, but what I did see I liked much; so I did Mrs. Fox; so I did her brother, Mr. Charlton. One hardly ever sees a marriage so equal in age, station, fortune, and the precious endowments of good looks, and good breeding, which make a wedding-day grace-

ful as well as hopeful. It was very grand; and I always feel on those occasions a touch of melancholy, sympathising with the brother and sister whose pet and companion has been torn away from them to a distant home. At dear Mary ——'s wedding I felt such a presentiment as I certainly did not feel at this. There was no reason, except perhaps my own bad spirits at the time, and my strong feeling that that tender and sensitive young creature, pure and gentle, and delicate as a white rose, demanded a peculiarity of care which it was hardly probable she would receive—a living child, to that fond and loving heart, might perhaps reconcile the many wants which she appears to find where she is—or rather, the one want of fit companionship. It is society for which she languishes; not company. Then her spirits are not so strong as yours. "Cheerfulness is the health of virtue" (somebody says so, I think), and her mental temperament is less healthful than yours. In my life I have known no one more happily constituted than you, my dear friend; and, looking at Mr. H——'s delightful spirits, I am tempted to think the organization partly hereditary; at all events, it is a thing to thank God for—a high and invaluable blessing. All this time I have not answered your most kind invitation, nor can I. People have been inviting themselves to my poor cottage, and then, when they went away, have said they would come again. You will see, my dearest Miss H——, that under these circumstances I cannot name my time. I must go to London for a few days on earnest business, too, and I must shut myself up to get a promised book written. But I really and sincerely wish to go and

see you—(may I bring my little maid with me? It is unluckily a question of health), and I will contrive it if possible. I wonder whether next summer it would be a too great presumption to try to coax you to occupy my little chamber—eh? Be sure that I will come if I possibly can.

December 21st, 1844.

I cannot enough tell you, my very dear friend, how much I rejoice at your very kind letter. I did not deserve to hear from you, not having answered your last. The reason for that was that I had been so plundered by a thieving gardener, that I had nothing worth sending, even if the season had been proper, which it was not. At present it will go hard but I will send you some seeds—the best I have, though not what I used to have. The destruction committed in a garden by two unfaithful servants, the one following the other, can hardly be imagined. I have, however, some roots of Œnothera grandiflora, which you liked so much for the spring; and I send even now two packets of very choice seeds, and will forward some more in a day or two. I hope to find the Siberian larkspur among my seeds. If not, you must have a root with the Œnothera, and some cuttings of fuschias, of which I have a very good collection, and which in the spring strike almost at will.

The last work of Elizabeth Barrett, my other very dear friend, has been largely diffused in America (where a large edition was simultaneously printed),

and full half of the English edition is already gone. Have you seen the volumes? The two poems that conclude each volume are most beautiful. The two great ones, "A Drama of Exile," and "A Vision of Poets," I like much less—or rather, not at all, in spite of occasional fine passages. She is a woman of the highest genius, but she is obscure. Do you know Mrs. Archer Clive (the V. of "Blackwood")? I think that you would like her verses; and I am sure that you would like her. I met Mrs. Gore, the authoress, in London this year, at a party given to bring us together, and was quite amused at her resemblance to her books: such thorough worldliness I never saw before, and never shall again.

What do you think of Mesmerism? Miss Martineau's case has made a great stir.

May 22nd, 1845.

Be quite sure, dearest friend, that I shall be delighted with your lodgings (they only seem too convenient), if I be in a state to come at all. I do not mean in health, for I am as well as usual; but since your most kind letter arrived, I have been thunderstruck at discovering that a servant, with the very highest character and the most correct recommendations from an intimate friend of my own, has not only appropriated money given her for weekly expenses, and for the payment of the few bills I allowed to go on, but has opened all my letters for above six months, to prevent the discovery of her misdeeds, and

has half stripped the house of clothes, linen, laces, and furniture. My only comfort is, that she began her depredations the very week that she came into the house, so that it is not my too great facility that tempted her. Everybody is furious with me for not proceeding against her; but she had an accomplice who has five young children, and a dying husband. The cases could not be separated. I had seen the poor man, and I really could not prosecute his wretched wife, with the certainty of his death following immediately upon her commitment. I suppose I am wrong, for everybody is against me, except my excellent friend Mr. Lovejoy, our great Reading bookseller; but I could not do it, and no more is to be said. Now this hinders me from going to town, where I meant to be next week; for I have only a little girl of sixteen in the house, and everything is in a confusion that there is no describing, to say nothing of the loss. It will hinder me from going to France also, because the money destined to that expedition is gone to defray the large losses caused by this robbery; but I do hope that my journey into Buckinghamshire, upon which I have set my heart, will still take place. Do you know any very trusty servant, who can make caps and gowns, can see to my simple cookery, wait upon me, &c., with a girl under her? I want a good upper-servant, where two are kept, and everything is done at home.

Till I do get a person I cannot stir; and I think your county, less populous than ours, likely to afford a better sample of the good old-fashioned maid-servant. Forgive me, dearest friend, for troubling you with this detail.

To Mrs. Acton Tindal.

April 28th, 1847.

It was only the last time I wrote to Mrs. P—— that I begged her to tell you how much I had been delighted by the two fine ballads in "Jerrold's Magazine."

In the last two months I have been quite a cripple from rheumatism, and one very clever medical man says that he can do nothing for me, but that there is good hope that, as cold weather brought it on, so warm weather may carry it off. In that hope I live, very thankful that my old love of reading has increased, and that I enjoy fine poetry as vividly as when I was a girl. As to writing, I do not think I shall ever do anything more. Why should I fritter away any little reputation that I may have earned, by writing down to the very dregs, as I see done by so many people?

The Archbishop of Toledo ought to have known how to stop *before* the apoplexy. Am I not right? —now say the very truth, dear friend, and remember that I shall be sixty years old next birthday, and that I have lived and worked like four (as the French say) in the last thirty years. Have you read Duffy's "Irish Library?" If not, do. It is quite in your way—reprints of curious old histories, and delicious lyrical poetry. It is the cheapest book published —only one shilling the volume; but the quality is the thing. Read especially Gavin Duffy's "Ballads of Ireland," and Barry's "Songs of Ireland." I knew Griffin and Banim as novelists and dramatists, but

had no notion of their great poetical merit. I had a very remarkable *first* work sent to me yesterday—"Poems," by Julia Day, of Bath: look at it, if it come in your way.—I do not defend Dumas, who is a sad coxcomb, and whose novels and compiled histories (Napoleon and Louis XIV.) are much better than his novels; but, surely, Balzac is a great artist, and I am much nearer agreeing with what the Bishop of Oxford said to you about George Sand, than with the elder fashion of wholesale condemnation. She has many fine qualities, and tremendous faults. As to the present English novels, I cannot read them; they are so trashy, and flashy, and dashy; written in a month, to perish and be forgotten in a year.

Sept. 4th, 1847.

If I lived within reach of William Harness, I would take your article to him at once (it is excellent), and have a long talk with him about its destination. But I know my man—the very best friend that lives in the world, and one of the worst possible correspondents. Besides he is just now in a round of "country houses;" just come from a month at the Deepdene, and going to Lord Beresford's and Lord Dacre's for the rest of the autumn, so that there would be a great danger of the MS. being lost. The subject is badly calculated to make its way just now; because it is one of which the Puseyites have taken possession, and of which rational people are, therefore, afraid. But it will have done good, at all events, by drawing so friendly a communication from

Mr. S——. Nothing astonishes me so much as that anybody who can live without writing should take the trouble, especially in prose, for poetry will come.

I have sent to Mr. Bennett, Lord Nugent's amiable critique, most valuable to a young poet; although I perhaps, diminished the efficacy of the medicament by the drop of honey with which I companioned it—an American paper containing a reprint of the identical "Skylark," and the very highest praise. It is, however, a pledge of the reprint, both of his book and yours, that Mr. Fields should so immediately have attended to my request by making Mr. Bennett's name known in America.

Heaven bless you, dear friend, say everything for me to the family at Dinton, and to Mr. Acton Tindal. He must let me have one line, just to tell me of the event to which I look forward with so much interest. I am so glad that there will be a little one at Horsenden also.

September 23rd, 1847.

I can't help writing one little line to meet you at home, to thank you again and again for the great pleasure; the great happiness you conferred upon me by coming here; and to tell you (so old a friend may venture to take such a liberty) how more than delighted I was with your happiness, yourself, and your husband. God grant that you may long, very long, enjoy all the felicity of which this life is possible, and of which your present station is more susceptible than any other on the face of the earth.

Thank you, again and again. I shall certainly come to Aylesbury next summer (D.V.). Walking fatigues me so greatly, that I am looking about for some very cheap little pony-chaise, under duty. I have already gotten a little square, rough pony, used to drawing such a vehicle, and if I can meet with one, and find that it does not ruin me to keep such an equipage, my little maid, who is a capital whip, will drive me over to you next summer; somewhere about the beginning of August, say; when there is a moon. It will be my castle-in-the-air all the winter. You say that you have the Irish books; do, of all, love, read Banim's "Soggarth Aroon," Davis's "Sack of Baltimore," and all Gerald Griffin's songs and ballads. I am not far from thinking him one of the very greatest of lyrical poets in the language, and his life is as interesting as his poetry is exquisite. Get that "Gerald Griffin's Life and Letters" from the library, and also Lamartine's "Histoire des Girondins;" of course they have it at Roland's, though I myself got it from Mr. Lovejoy's, where they have many French books. I have not seen him since his return; but I know how grateful he will be for your goodness in writing in his little girl's album. I shall tell Mr. Bennett of your feeling for his poetry. He is your devoted admirer already. Oh, he tells me that he proposed me, with four other honorary members of the Whittington Club,—Miss Edgeworth, Joanna Baillie, Mary Somerville, and Leigh Hunt; really an honour.

December 25th, 1847.

I rejoice, my dear love, at what you tell me, and you will soon have a new interest that will rival all others in your case. Have I told you of my misfortune in the loss of my dear old dog? You remember the beauty of his auburn curls, dark and glossy as the rind of the horse-chesnut, and with a golden light over them in the sunbeams; but none but I could tell his high qualities, his gentleness, his sweetness, his over estimate of kindness, his forgetfulness of wrong, his sagacity, and his sympathy. He remembered those who had been kind to him after an absence of years. I never shall forget his sudden recognition of an old servant whom he had not seen for three years; he jumped up upon her, leaped up until he kissed her face, and then licked her feet and her hands in his ecstacy. It is a real misfortune to have lost my Flush. I am desirous to see Alfred Tennyson's new work. The last new thing that I have read was a story of Miss Edgeworth's,* a curiosity on account of her age; but it reads just like an imitation of her early works. I am afraid that I should not get on with Miss Pardoe. Did you ever read Dumas's "Louis XIV?" Much as I in general dislike those books made from other books, I like that; the compilation is so skilful; the materials so racy, and the writing so full of nerve; by-the-way, his "De Paris à Cadix" is capital.

* "Orlandino."

April 13th, 1848.

I don't know, dearest friend, whether the enclosed list* will interest you? If it do, be so good as to distribute the two I send, and if any good can be done I will send you more. My coadjutor smuggled in "Our Village," which you will pardon. We are about another list, that the books may be interchanged in adjoining parishes, which will include "Walton's Lives," "Holy Living and Dying," and other great works that we omitted. The Inspector of Education takes up our plan, so do the Poor Law Commissioners (for the daughter of one of whom the list was originally made), so that we shall have more than common chance of being useful, which is all we wish to be. I am sure that in these days education is imperative. Have you read Louis Blanc's two works? His "Histoire de Dix Ans" is most eloquent; but they are bad political economists, and I don't like the result. I have to-day a packet of letters from America, all crying out against the Mexican war. I have had a frightful accident, or rather most providential escape. A pony kicked the chaise to pieces while I was in it. I am still very poorly; but better during the last two days.

May 21st, 1848.

I cannot thank you half enough, my dear and kind friend, for the magnificent basket of plants arrived this morning (Saturday). "A friend in need

* Of Books for Lending Libraries for the Poor—discussed elsewhere.—C.

is a friend indeed," and never was anybody in more want of a charitable supply of flowers than I at this moment. I thank you for them again and again; they will be thrice valued as coming from you; the Salpiglossis, especially, is one of my pet annuals; but all happen to be of those that were most wanted.

I have a steady, respectable, stupid, hopeless person in the garden, and I suppose I must do with him as best I may. Ever since writing to you I have been more or less poorly, always under the doctor's hands, and so nervous, that although I have a pony who is said to be of irreproachable quietness, I can only make up my mind to get into the pony-chaise, when one very busy friend can make time to drive me; that is about once a week. What do you think of all these changes abroad? A friend of mine (one of the Piedmontese exiles) has been to Turin (he made the journey there and back, staying a reasonable time, in twenty days); seen Charles Albert several times, with whom he was charmed; seen Silvio Pellico, his old fellow-sufferer; and finally carried the despatches to Paris. He might have been elected for two places, such was the enthusiasm towards an old martyr, and did recover some of his property, which had been confiscated by the Austrians. He is a most interesting person, fervent, honest, frank, and gentle, and one cannot but hope that the country which bears such men will be freed from the foreign yoke, which weighed upon it so heavily.

I saw a letter from a friend of Madame Lamartine yesterday, who described the poet as ten years older

since February, and he was already an old-looking man.

Have you seen Forster's "Life of Goldsmith," very interesting and amusing? Do read the "Autobiography of a Working-Man." It is as graphic as Defoe, a real autobiography; not a clever novel like "Jane Eyre." Read also "François le Champi," by George Sand, and Mr. Rowton's "Female Poets." I told him that he would have a new English poetess for his next volume! I have been reading, on your recommendation, "Les Mystères de Rome," very clever and powerful; but what wretches those Romans were! Adieu.

Taplow, August 6th, 1848.

You have no notion how very ill I have been for the last six months; not of any disease, but of a complete loss of strength and power, and other distressing symptoms of internal weakness. Everybody prescribes change of air, and the sea; and Mr. May said that, as my little cottage wanted some repairs, I might go to some quiet, very quiet place, not beyond a day's journey in the pony-chaise, and not to the sea. Accordingly, I fixed upon this pretty spot, as the centre of many charming drives, and a friend engaged for me very pleasant rooms in a delightfully retired house, whose garden—full of trees and flowers—opens to the river just above the fine old bridge; we have even our own stairs to the water from our own little terrace. I fixed on this spot, the rather

with an *arrière-pensée* to Aylesbury; but Mr. May shook his head at that, said that it was *two* pony-chaise days' journey from home, and that I should see how I stood this change. Accordingly, what he foresaw has happened. At first I went on well, very well indeed, and I really thought myself in a way to do well again. But I had been about too much, to Ockwells (*vide* Nash's "Mansions of England"), to Lady Place, where the revolution was hatched, to Dropmore, to Cliefden Springs, to Beaconsfield, to Windsor, and to Burnham Beeches; and people have been calling, and friends have been coming from London, and for the last three days I have been, and still continue, miserably ill, and must get home as quickly as possible, and think of nothing but staying quiet. If it please God that I get through the winter, I must see you next year in London, or contrive to get to Aylesbury from thence. It is certainly most provoking to be, as the crow flies, so near to you, and yet so entirely separated, from the absence of railways and communication of all sorts. Perhaps your beautiful country owes some of its charms to the being more inaccessible than would be deemed possible in a locality so near London.

A little friend of mine went to Aylesbury—or, rather, the neighbourhood (Haddenham), a week or two back, from our parish, and was compelled to sleep upon the road; she went by Maidenhead and returned by Oxford, and was forced to spend a night at an inn in both cases. I shall certainly, dear love, continue to see all your articles. You cannot be in a better way. Do you know, the most eloquent of our living prose writers, John Ruskin (the Oxford

graduate)? Have you read that charming, wrong-headed book of his, "The Modern Painters?" He brought his beautiful young wife to see me about a fortnight ago, and is now ill at Salisbury. He is certainly the most charming person that I have ever known.. I am sure that quiet is absolutely needful to me; and even the admirable kindness of a very favourite friend, who came here to meet me, has done me harm.

God bless you, dear love. If I live till next year I hope to share your floral bounty, having got a man who does not—as my last did—kill all the flowers.

Feb. 8th, 1849.

I do indeed rejoice to hear that you are recovering, and I trust that your re-establishment will be complete. Those stomach disorders are most trying. I have myself been confined for above a fortnight, almost to my bed, and quite to my room, with one of these wretched colds and coughs. To-day, I bless God that I am so much better as to be able to write.

If you have a copy of the "New Monthly" with your poem, send it to me; for that is the only one of the greater magazines that I have no opportunity of seeing. To-day brought me a letter from dear Mrs. Browning. She is expecting her confinement hopefully, and inquires most kindly after you and your boy. She says, the Florentines have turned out their Archbishop, are going to elect one themselves, and the favourite candidate is not even in orders!

Can you help me to any letters of introduction to

Paris? We shall go, God willing, the middle of next month. Mr. H——, who was with me near Taplow, is going with me; and we are to meet ——, who is going *then*, in order to be present when Meyerbeer brings out his great opera of "Le Prophète." For my own part, I am charmed to see a Napoleon at the Elysée; it seems to me the greatest piece of poetical justice of our times. I am reading Macaulay's very able but very painful book, and I have just been reading twenty-one volumes of "Mirabeau," including eight volumes of "Mémoires," by his adopted son, Lucas Montigny. Do read that life! He was certainly next to Napoleon, perhaps even before Napoleon, the greatest man of modern times.

P.S.—I was much struck with your excellent passage about Prize Poets. I am intimate with the family of poor Charles Blackstone* (the last prize poet), at Oxford. His father is grandson of the judge, has the living of Heckfield, which Mrs. Trollope's father held. His poor mother has not left her bed since.

Feb. 17th, 1849.

I have great respect for Miss Strickland, both for her great industry and acquirements and the use she makes of them—excellent books; but to say the truth, I, for my part, unless history be as vividly

* There is little doubt that this promising, highly-gifted, and fine young man, came by his miserable death through his own almost incredible carelessness.

written as by Thierry or Thiers, prefer the materials of history called Memoirs;—don't you? Will you tell Miss Strickland, with my very best compliments, that Mrs. Sigourney, in writing to me, expressed a fear that a letter of hers had not reached Miss S. I can sympathise with the quantity of letter writing that she must have upon her hands, and her delay in acknowledging the homage of the Transatlantic poetess, who is, however, a very kind and excellent person. Will you also ask Miss Strickland, on my account, after her sister, Mrs. Moodie,* who, at one time, used to write to me, and of whom I have heard nothing for years. Did I tell you that Mrs. Jameson and her niece had joined the Brownings, and were travelling with them to Pisa? My last letter from my dear friend was dated Moulins, and finished with these sad words, "I am so tired—so tired!" Do read the sixth volume of Madame D'Arblay's "Memoirs," excellently arranged by my friend Henry Chorley. It is a pretty picture of a love match: she working for him in England, he for her in France. Read also "Le Coq du Clocher,"† a supremely clever French novel, in a very different style from the usual romantic and passionate vein.

* Miss Susanna Strickland—Mrs. Moodie—emigrated, I think, to Australia: at all events, a picture of the emigrant's fate, "Life in the Bush," or a book with some such title, lives in my mind, as containing one of the most dreary confessions of endurance and disappointment on the part of a civilized woman, forced into a new life, ever given to the world.—C.

† By Louis Reybaud.—C.

I ought to have written at once to thank you, my ever dear and kind friend, for your most affectionate gift; but at the same time with your basket came two favourite friends; and what with talking and listening, and going from place to place with them, I had not a moment to call my own. One always lives two lives in the fine weather of our too short summers, and I am pretty sure to get done up by the fatigue and the excitement. What a noble person Lord Chandos seems to be, and how he has been sacrificed by his father and his ancestors! Altogether, Buckinghamshire, from Hampden's time downwards, has had many persons remarkable for good and for evil, —more than its share of those whom the world will not let die.

I am just reading Robert Browning's "Poems;" there is much more in them than I thought to find. Read them if they come in your way. He ought to be forced to write journey work for his daily bread (say for the "Times"), which would make him write clearly. Have you and dear Mrs. Ouvry met yet? You are sure to like each other. Besides her talent she is a fine, cheerful, practical, healthy-minded young woman, who makes herself and everybody belonging to her happy. I have not seen her husband. Tell me about him. What I have heard and known of him, I like; but I more than like her. What hinders poor dear Mary I—— from making the best of life, as Mrs. Ouvry does?

Date unknown.

What stirring times these are! I have a friend coming next week who is intimate with Arago, Cavaignac, and Lamartine (his wife, you know, was a Miss Birch), and who used to act in her own plays with Marrast, when he was professor of History in a commercial school. She says, that he and Thiers are the smallest men of Europe. I am a little afraid of her coming, having been very poorly ever since Christmas, and she being one of those brilliant people who tire one to death. She is not coming actually to me, but to lodge in the village with her French maid.

April 25th, 1849.

Ten thousand thanks, my very dear friend, for all your kindness.* I still hope to go to Paris, if not now, in the autumn (it is a question of strength), I will be sure to let you know. For the annuals I shall be most grateful. Now, after wearing all my friends out, I have really got a nice person to work in the garden, who takes an interest in it, and all we want is material. I have not read the novel you mention. Mrs. —— seems to me to deal most affrontingly in commonplace moralities; some day or other she'll tell her readers that it is pretty to be good humoured, and wrong to steal. All the novels are nonsense, except the exquisite "Mary Barton," and Mr. Savage's book.† How is the beautiful boy?

* In getting her some introductions abroad.

† "The Falcon Family."

and dear Mr. Acton Tindal, and all your dear people? Do you ever see a friend of mine, Mrs. ——? she is a most agreeable woman—(I don't know her husband—a clergyman of your parts)—but she suits me exactly,* and so she would you. Miss —— looks down upon her from the sublime heights of poetry and literature, but I am sure that you would not. If you happen to meet, do take notice of her for my sake. Now, see to make your tale not a series of scenes, but a *whole*, and if you have any misgivings that such a part ought to be better, write it over again. Work, my dearest! and justify my pride in you. It is altogether a question of more or less painstaking. You have in your poems an excellent choice of subjects, and that is a great point.

June 29th, 1849.

No, my dear young friend, don't have one of those leafy or flowery titles. They are of bad taste, and bad omen. "The books die," as your friend, Lord Nugent, says, and I want yours to live! Besides, it's French. Don't you know the titles of Victor Hugo's charming lyrical volumes, odes and ballads, "Feuilles d'Autumne," "Chants du Crépuscule," "Rayons," "Ombres Orientales."—No! no leaves! Why not Historic Ballads, and other Poems? Historic Ballads standing for the title of the rest, saving your conscience (you'll get not to mind those trifles). As to any poems which may be neither ballads nor historical, you'll not find a better title than

that, and it has some meaning, some pith, is not missy-ish.

I rejoice, dear love, that you are safe home, and shall indeed be glad when there is another beautiful baby. You will not soon see a prettier than Master Nicholas. Very kind of Mrs. Southey. I had a tender message the other day from a very different person, Mr. Lever, the most charming, personally, I suspect, of all our authors. He is now at Lucca.

Nov. 28, 1849.

Ten thousand congratulations to you and to dear Mr. Acton Tindal, dearest friend, on the birth of this other little boy—now you'll want a little girl; but boys are best for the majority, and two boys and one girl is a perfect family. Next, I have to congratulate you on the birth of your book.* All good fortune attend it! I will transmit the copies faithfully. Miss Skerrett is the niece of Mr. Mathias. He never was married. I am glad you dedicate your book to Lord Lindsay. He quoted me in one of his. I like him as Madame did Louis Quatorze when he had danced with her! Do you remember?—Talking of dedications, I wish you would read a little volume of Poems, by Julia Day, second series, which she has just dedicated to me. There is great merit, finish, harmony, and purity of thought and style. I have never seen her, but from her letters she must be a very interesting person. God bless you. I am writing in such darkness, at two o'clock in the day,

* A little forgotten volume chiefly of early verses.

that I don't see what I write. I wish you to ask Chapman and Hall whether "The Ogilvies"* is not Mrs. Browning's? From internal evidence I think it is.

Feb. 13th, 1850.

Thank you, dearest friend, for your kindness in sending me the information respecting "Jane Eyre." The account of the authoress is just what one would expect from the books; and I like "Shirley." It is racy, and all the better for the absence of melodramatic interest. I have been reading "Mrs. Margaret Maitland," and was much amused; but it is amusement without approbation, for the book seems to me full of an assumed narrowness and bigotry written to tell, and with an attempt at crying down all progress, which cannot be enough protested against. Have you read "Dr. Chalmers' Life?" It is provoking to think how much more interesting it might have been, if one had been suffered to see more of the man; at present all is merged in the minister, and the one letter announcing his marriage shows how well worth reading some of those that are omitted were likely to be. One bit of his own bad taste is curiously amusing—his disappointment at John Kemble's "Coriolanus," the most perfect performance that I ever saw, and I suppose the very finest ever seen on any stage. Poor dear M—— J., she is just exactly the *femme incomprise* at whom Charles de Bernard loves to laugh. It is most

* By Miss Mulock.

fortunate for her that, being English, she confines her lamentations to female friends; if she were a French woman, she would pour forth her griefs to a male confidant, which might be dangerous.

I am in great trouble. A dear friend of mine, Charles Boner, one of the most accomplished and talented young men in Europe, sent me last month, from Ratisbon, part of a MS. on "Chamois Shooting in the Mountains," keeping no copy of it, and it has never arrived. I have written to our English Post-office, but can get no tidings. He is tutor to the sons of the Prince of Tour and Taxis, who was once Postmaster-General of Germany, so ought to understand such matters, but it is a serious loss.

The subject would, I know, be beautifully treated, —it is attractive and unhacknied, and there is a real money value in such a MS. I can only hope that it may turn up yet. How are you off for wind? All my garden palings are blown down, and in the height of the gale a great bell outside the house rang the whole night through, mixed with the howling of the tempest. There was a strange poetry in the sound.

(About) March 1850.

I have been reading all manner of books—Southey's "Life and Letters"—"Memoirs of the House of Orleans"—Lamartine's "Revolution of 1848"—a glorious piece of vanity, but with some interesting details, especially as respects the flight of the royal family. Be very sure that the author of "Shirley" is a

she, a female member of the church, daughter of some Yorkshire clergyman I suspect she will prove; but certainly a woman. I delight in "Shirley" herself, with her fine spoilt child nature, her pride and her self-will, and her love, given to the only one whom she respects and fears. All the Moores I like, too, and the two boys, and those scenes in the schoolroom. It is one of the books I should best like to possess, and should read oftenest. Just now I have two hobbies, "Histories of the Jews"—(I am enquiring for one written, I believe, by Lord Lindsay, on the Jews in Spain. Do you know it?)—my gifted friend Miss Goldsmid has inoculated me with this passion; the other is all the literature of the Irish rebellion in 1798, caught in the natural way, from reading poor Thomas Davis's magnificent "Life of Curran," and his edition of those matchless speeches. I always like to hunt up fifty or sixty volumes upon one subject, and to go through with them at once. You are the only young poet I ever knew, in whom authorship had not produced a disregard of other people's writings, and I look upon it as a great proof of strength and real power. Have you seen a little volume of poems by Julia Day? very graceful, harmonious, and pure. I have never seen her; but, from her letters, she is very interesting. Another girl who will be heard of in literature (much younger than Miss Day, although married), is Mrs. George Pollock. If these two live they will both, especially the last, do much, but they are more likely to die, than to fulfil their promise of talent. So, my dear, we must make much of you, and you must take care for yourself for all our sakes. I was reading only last night "An Aged

Lady,"—is it in the volume I wonder? It is exceedingly tender and true.

April 7th, 1850.

I think that my last to you was detained here many days, which you will pardon when you know that my dear and faithful maid's little boy has been at the point of death with small-pox, after vaccination. He was sent here from his school at Reading, because the disease had broken out next door, and a week after our man took it, and both have had it most heavily. Get your children inoculated. I know of above thirty cases here about, this winter—not in Reading, but close by here; some of them fatal? How much I have been pleased by Southey's "Common-place Book." All happiness to you, dear friend, and to all whom you love.

June 8th, 1850.

I thank you heartily my dear friend, for your welcome note and most kind intended present. I am at home, and have been there very poorly for nearly three weeks. It began with a feverish cold, then came on a direct attack of fever which confined me to my bed above a week, and now although better, I cannot get strong; at present I am taking everything for that purpose, from the most powerful tonic medicines, to jellies and arrow-root; so that your chickens and asparagus, will be just what Mr.

May would order. Thank you a thousand times for your unfailing and untiring attention. The annuals shall bloom this year in my poor old garden, and I trust (D.V.) to carry their seeds next year to another; where is not very sure, although I live in hopes of only migrating about two and a half miles further from Reading on the same road, where I am now, only not in the high road, but up a little lane. That is uncertain; the only sure thing is, that move I must. This house is falling about my ears, letting in all the wind and damp, and actually uninhabitable in wet or cold weather; and as the landlord is a minor, a ward in Chancery, and the receiver under the Master won't repair, I have given notice in form, and shall certainly go at Michaelmas, though with a heavy heart. You must see "La Tempesta"* by all means—I hear a great report of it. "The Catspaw"† is, I believe, bad;—of course, I mean that I have heard of Scribe's Opera from those who have seen the rehearsals. He himself is said to be a delightful person, simple, homely, and quite unlike the coxcombical race of French artists. He says that Viardot is the greatest living actress—Rachel is not to be named with her.

* The music by Halèvy. The book having been commissioned by Mr. Lumley—then manager of Her Majesty's Theatre, for Mendelssohn to set—rejected by him on account of the last act, and then transferred to the composer of "La Juive." The best that a man of limited means could do, was done by Halèvy on the occasion—also the best that Mr. Lumley could do—but the opera perished, as may be seen by those who care to refer to "Thirty Years' Musical Recollections," by the Editor.—C.

† By Jerrold.

For my part I am likely to be very busy. Besides my constant job of answering unanswerable letters, Mr. Bennoch having taken such a fancy to having a collected edition of my dramatic works during my lifetime, that I have perforce consented; and besides the preface, there will be a long tale to be written, for a collection of stories, which is to succeed the plays. This in strict confidence—the matter not being yet quite arranged. Then the visitors which this time of year brings are very numerous. Hawthorne is just landed, and will be here in a day or two, —other Americans, and people come from London, or on their way to the west of England or Ireland, oftener than any one would believe;—often a great pleasure, sometimes great fatigue, for I am still unable to move, except as lifted from stair to stair, and borne along by Sam's two strong hands under my arms. I cannot get up from my seat, or stand, or move either foot from the floor; am still lifted into bed, and unable to move when there, and in this helpless condition my going to London, is quite out of the question. Charles Boner wants me to try the baths of Wildbad, but that also is impossible; he says in a letter I have just received from him—and he lives amongst all the Kings and Princes of Germany—that the universal opinion there is, that the Emperor of Russia is mad, insanity being in his family, as in almost all the imperial or royal houses, except that of Buonaparte.—No doubt there is a bee in Mrs. ——'s bonnet, and it would be no wonder if there were in Miss ——'s, for her *father* and *mother* both died mad. Say everything for me to your dear people, my beloved friend, and do not speak of my project of publishing my plays.

December 13th, 1850.

I cannot tell you, my dear love, how much pleasure your dear letter gave me. Yes, it will be a great satisfaction to see your new place growing up and forming it to your own taste. You are born to be happy, and to make happy. I always felt that, and never more thoroughly than now. Mr. Bennett has brought out his volume of Poems. He wishes to send a copy to you, and as he asked me to convey it, and I have no means to do so, he had better send it viâ Chapman and Hall, your mutual publishers. You will like it, I think. I find very fastidious people, such as Mr. Kenyon, liking it much for its grace and richness, and a certain absence of all imitation, very rare in this age. I must get on with my own book, having come to a pause when I was forced to leave off writing out of doors. I think you'll like it. Of course I rejoice over Alfred Tennyson, so does everybody. Have you seen Mrs. Browning's new edition? Last night brought me two very fine and striking books of poetry from America. One, "Songs of Labour," by their great Quaker poet, Whittier. Poor Lord Nugent! He is a man to regret, little as I knew him. I always do lament the loss of those who possess high accomplishment, as well as high birth. Our most accomplished great man now seems to me to be Lord Carlisle.

LETTERS TO MRS. TINDAL.

Mr. Ainsworth is quite right; there is great power in the enclosed, and it would do good to your reputation. Will you tell your friend, Mrs. W—— E——, how very much gratified I am by what she says? I always thought those Greyhound* verses exquisite. Many thanks for the promised annuals. The roses are all alive, but have not grown yet; nothing has. I am still suffering most severely from rheumatism, can hardly cross the room, or get up from a chair, and have been lifted in and out of my own low pony carriage, and step by step up stairs to bed ever since January. Everybody likes the portrait; but it is the oil painting that is so very fine. Mr. Bentley wished to buy it, but Mr. Lucas would not sell it, but has presented it to me; I have given it to dear Mr. Fields, the most charming person that America has ever sent us. The letters I get from thence are astonishing for warmth and kindness, from everybody. Mrs. Sparks (wife of the President of Harvard College) wants me to go with man and maid, and pony and phaeton, and live with her and her husband for two or three years; and really the rest are nearly the same. Hawthorne's new book (not printed yet) is finer than any (former one). He and Longfellow, and Holmes,

* See Miss Mitford's "Recollections of a Literary Life."

are amongst my kindest friends. I don't care for any English statesman; my only enthusiasm is for Louis Napoleon; I always adored the Emperor, and think him still greater. So do Mrs. Browning and Mr. Fields (who spent a long time in Paris, and saw much of him and that charming person, old Lady Stanley of Alderley, Gibbon's friend and correspondent sixty years ago). If you know or hear anything of him tell me; when we meet I can give you anecdotes, good store. I ought to go to town, but am afraid of London carriages, door-steps, and staircases. The only real way of getting a copy of that picture would be from Mr. Lucas himself.

May 29th, 1851.

I do indeed rejoice to hear from you, my ever dear friend; it is very long since we have either of us written. My last news of you was from Mr. Ouvry, whom I have never seen, but who writes to me now and then, if his sweet wife be busy or indisposed. I like him much; as to her, she is a person to love, as you will find when you know her. Now let me tell you of my favourite Americans. My greatest favourite is Dr. Holmes—Oliver Wendell Holmes, a young, but very eminent physician of Boston—the most popular man of that literary town; one who sings almost as well as he writes, and speaks as well as he sings. His poems have the rare merit now-a-days of being eminently finished, polished, and healthy—a mixture of Pope and Goldsmith—but thoroughly American. I don't think you will get his

"Poems" here, but will get a specimen of them called "Astrea," at Mr. John Chapman's in the Strand, a little book of less than forty pages, recited before a society at Yale College, which seems to me full of beauty and of truth. Do get it. He will be a very great writer.* My next favorites are Longfellow, whose small pieces, especially one called "Nuremburg," and the "Psalm of Life," are charming and Whittier, whose "Massachusetts to Virginia," and "Cassandria Southwick," are very fine. He is a Quaker, and rather practical upon the forcing of Abolition. Both Longfellow and Whittier may be got cheaply in English editions. Holmes is not yet known here. Also procure and read Lord Carlisle's two lectures on Pope, and on his American Travels. They are charming. I rejoice to hear of your new verses,—always, my very dear friend, upholding my faith in you. My book has been at a stand still during the last winter, owing to my having been very poorly; and now for the last three months I am so lame that I can hardly put one foot before the other. I believe the wet winter and this damp house caused it, and accordingly I have taken another cottage at Swallowfield, which is a good, comfortable, soundly built cabin, standing high and dry at the end of a lane, a little way out of the road from Reading to Basingstoke, above five miles from the first-mentioned town, but still among my old neighbours, and my old walks, if it may please God that I shall ever be able to walk again. It is small and ugly, but unpretending and prettily situated; at present the garden

* This prophecy has been well fulfilled. There is no more original story in any language than "Elsie Venner."—C.

is very small, but there is a little meadow which we may break up, and shall; and if you have, dear friend, any hardy creepers for our little porch, or the sides and front of the cottage, or any young honeysuckles or roses to spare in the autumn, we shall be most thankful; or any annuals that you have to spare this summer. Your kind present last year was most ornamental to our poor garden, and prospered well; the man who drives me, and takes care of my pony, being fond of flowers, and a naturally careful and industrious person, of course. Dear friend, this is only if you have them quite to spare.

"Astrea," by Dr. Holmes—"Poems," by Dr. Holmes—"Lines on opening a Cemetery at Boston," by Dr. Holmes—"The Boston Book" (the first I know you can get from Mr. John Chapman, 142 Strand)—"Poems," by John Whittier—"Poems," by Henry Longfellow (both of these are reprinted in England, and may be got for a shilling or two).

Oct. 3rd, 1851.

I am so sorry not to have seen you and your dear sister, my beloved friend, but you must come on your return, and let me know the day and the hour, and stay as long as you can. K—— tells me you most kindly proposed sending me some creeping roses, and so forth; the smallest donations will be welcome, for our old plants were too big to move, and we have no new ones. This place will be very comfortable by-and-by. It is a liveable place, wanting a pretty sitting-

room, but rich in all else; and the walks and drives behind, the woody lanes, and pastoral water meadows of the valley of the Loddon, are charming. I have a terrible job before me in arranging my books. The man who brought my things, says that there were above four tons, bound and unbound. I have another terrible job in progress, finishing my own work. The friend with whom I left powers to dispose of it, sold three volumes instead of two, so I have one more to write. It will be called "Recollections of Books," and will be almost an autobiography—I hope you will like it. Adieu, dearest friend. I direct to Aylesbury, hoping it will reach you.

My address is Swallowfield, Reading.

Dec. 17th, 1851.

This little note goes by the hand of one of the persons whom I love. A certain Patty, who has so entirely the wit, the unexpectedness, and the warmth of heart, that make Shakespeare's Beatrice so charming, that it is a sort of alias of hers—and she answers as readily to the one name as the other—she has married a handsome young engineer, whose father and mother, Mr. and Mrs. Bell (farmers I think), are neighbours of yours, and being about to pay them a short Christmas visit, I shall give her my note.

Feb. 4th, 1852.

Your roses puzzled me more than I can tell. I have three or four friends in Hertfordshire, all likely enough to have sent them; and not expecting yours to come from that quarter, I really thought the Derings or the Jays must have sent them. However I would rather have them from you: I shall value them all the more as token flowers, like you in brightness and sweetness. I like them none the less for their Bonapartist names—Souvenir de Malmaison, Eugene Beauharnais, Géant des Batailles. They had a great escape; for, in spite of the nicety of the nurseryman's packing, five of the pots were smashed to atoms in that vile railway. Luckily the plants were not injured; they were planted forthwith, and doubtless will blow, if not next summer, the summer after. Oh, how I wish you were near enough to come often and see their growth! and that I in return could see your nosegays, human and floral. Mrs. Bell was charmed with your boys. But they can't help being pretty. The more you see of her the more you will like her; she is so able, and has all sorts of knowledge. She was charmed with you.

It is beyond all things most grievous, that I have not a copy of my book to send you; but one may as well get drops of blood out of his heart, as ask Mr. Bentley for a copy of that book. Henry Chorley, to whom it is inscribed, only got his last week. They tell me it is a great success, not so much in critiques here and there, as in the largeness of the sale, and the impression it makes in society. For the last three weeks there has not been a day that I have not received two or three letters from persons previously

unknown to me, and generally two or three gift books. Three or four of the works mentioned in it are already reprinting, and Mr. Bentley urges me by every means, direct and indirect, for another work; so far so well. If you meet with a volume of poetry bearing the name of Mary Maynard, read it, it has very fine things.

February 23rd, 1852.

I rejoice sincerely in the arrangement you have made, a very liberal one as to price, considering Mr. Lucas's high talent, and one with which I am assured you will be satisfied on all sides. The painter will like his sitters, and you will like him. The boy was a little cherub when I saw him, and you will have his beauty perpetuated just as if his likeness were fixed in a looking-glass. What is very odd is, that since you wrote last I have had a letter from Miss Shee, asking me whether I thought Mr. Lucas would undertake to paint a portrait of her sister, Mrs. Robert Dering (commemorated in the very same article with yourself), from a daguerotype and miniature, by Sir William Ross. Is not this strange? As she was going to town to her brother, Sir George Shee's, in Grosvenor Place, I told her she had better go and see my portrait at Mr. Lucas's, and then she might speak to him on the subject, adding, that I knew of two most successful portraits by him—one of Miss Milton, Mrs. Trollope's niece; the other, Lady Burlington. He had seen both those, but I have heard him say that seeing a miniature of Sir William Ross is as good as seeing the original. I

have not written to Mr. Lucas, and am curious to know whether he will paint that sweet person. It is very strange altogether, she sent me a basket of Hertfordshire roses for my cottage, as well as you; and there they are growing together. I believe her (judging from her letters, and from the report of persons who knew her) to have been one of the most charming women that ever lived; husband, and son, and sister, are heart-broken still, neither of them can get over her loss. Is not it a strange coincidence? They knew nothing of your intention. I am delighted at what you tell me about "Fraser." Mrs. Browning sent me the other day a very interesting account of the Empress. After a burst of admiration of the Emperor (she is even more enthusiastic about him than I am, which is saying much), she says, "I hear from the best authority that she is charming, and good at heart; she was educated at a respectable school at Clifton, and is very English, which does not prevent her shooting with pistols, leaping gates, driving four-in-hand, or even upsetting the carriage when the frolic requires it; as brave as a lion, and as true as a dog. Her complexion is very fair, white and pale, and pure as marble; her hair light, bordering upon sandy; they say she powders it with gold dust for effect. Beyond all doubt her beauty is more intellectual and less physical than is commonly represented, and she is a woman of very decided opinions. I like all this—don't you?—and I like her letter to the Prefect, as everybody must."

I hear from a friend in Paris to-day, that young Alexandre Dumas (a thorough *mauvais sujet*) is one of the party taken up for circulating libels. I also

hear that M. de Lamartine is utterly ruined, and everything is to be sold; one wonders how those successful French authors, Dumas, Balzac, and Lamartine, can have ran through all they have done. It seems like madness. I am sorry for him, although his abuse of the first Napoleon is most strange, and most unlucky for himself; for even if the present Emperor should pardon it, he could hardly accept favours immediately after such outrages. I agree with you that "Jane Eyre" is likely to be as good as anything the author will do; but I care little for modern English novels, and seldom look at them. President Sparks has just sent me two piquant answers to some criticism of Lord Mahon's on his Washington writings. Talking of piquant things, nothing was ever more saucy than Disraeli's speech the other night. He made the Ministers look like fools.

July 8th, 1852.

I take only a tiny bit of paper, dearest Mrs. Acton Tindal, not because my gratitude is small, but because my power of expressing my thanks for your constant kindness, dearest friend, is just now more limited than ever. For the last fortnight I have been confined to my bed, and there I still continue. The apparent cause is this: having, ever since January been fearfully lame with rheumatism, and becoming worse and worse, I asked Mr. May if he could do nothing for me, and he gave me a prescription (very simple, no colchicum; it would have affected, I verily believe, no stomach but mine) which acted exactly like sea-sickness, and after two

days' incessant retching I had an attack of fever, which has confined me to my bed ever since, except one day, when getting up for an hour or two, to receive some Americans bringing a letter from Mr. Hawthorne, the sickness returned worse than ever, followed by a fresh attack of fever. However, I think that I am rather better to-night, and that I shall gradually amend. In the midst of this I had the great grief to see the death of sweet Mrs. Robert Dering. You remember her beautiful and tender little poem on "Church Services." I had never seen her, but her sister, Miss Shee (they are sisters of Sir George Shee, our ambassador at Stuttgardt), I know, and she *is* delightful; and I think I never knew letters so sweetly grateful, and fresh, and affectionate as Mrs. Dering's. She loaded me with kindnesses; and, amongst other things, sent me a fellow-gift to yours of climbing-roses, out of a Hertfordshire nursery. (N.B. They are all alive, dear love, hers and yours, in spite of drought and east wind.)

August 2nd, 1852.

Ah, my dearest friend! I see that you do not know how very ill I have been. Just before the hot weather set in I was seized with fever, which kept me confined to my bed above a month; and, although I now get up every day, and take a slow drive through our quiet lanes, my recovery is very lingering, and, till the last two days, when I am really mending, I have been one day mending, and another day worse. However, although I have had a great shake, and Mr. Harness, who came down to see me last week, thinks me breaking fast (as, indeed, every-

body's manner says, although their words may not), yet I myself think there is some life in me yet; one thing, however, is certain, that great care is still requisite. Mr. May does not allow me to call anywhere, not even upon the dear and admirable neighbours (the Russells), who, since my first attack, have never missed one day coming to see me. Poor Lady Russell had never gone beyond her own park gate after her husband's death, till she heard of my illness, and, like all kindness, hers has been self-rewarding, for it has given her an object of interest, and drawn her away from her sorrow. She is a most kind and excellent person, a Frenchwoman, and very clever in her own way, and her daughters have much of the splendid talent of their father. They are quite daughters to me; you would love them, and they would love you; for brought up by a most accomplished father, in the midst of the best books, and the best society, they have nothing of the young lady about them. Well, dearest friend, this must be an answer to your most kind invitation, but, if I do live to another summer, I must come to Aylesbury to see you and Mr. Acton Tindal, and your own dear people; and it would be no small temptation either to have a chance of seeing so remarkable a person as Mr. Layard, not forgetting Dr. Lee. There must be something very lovable in an old man who forces respect and kindness even from his opponents in an election contest. As to Mrs. Wynne Eyton,*

* Mrs. Wynne Eyton, daughter of Archdeacon Wrangham, and relict of the Rev. Edward William Barnard, of Cave Castle, whose polished verses Miss Mitford has quoted in her "Recollections of a Literary Life."

tell her that I have stolen her letter. I look upon her as an hereditary friend, and nothing would give me more pleasure than to become personally acquainted with her, either in Buckinghamshire or my own poor cottage. Mrs. R. wrote me whilst I was ill a most characteristic letter; she enclosed her translations from Schiller, desiring me to read them, and tell her in what way she would be likely to dispose of them to most advantage. Now, it had happened to me to have a talk with one of Blackwood's house this Spring, about that fine old series of "Horæ Germanicæ," by Gillies. I had asked him why they did not reissue it, and he said because there is no taste for such things, and it would not answer; now this referred to the great mass of very fine untranslated dramas which still remain of Oehlenschläger, &c., &c. So I felt sure that no great magazine would ever accept translations of anything so hackneyed as "Don Carlos," which everybody knows as well as "Macbeth," and I advised her to print for private distribution, having set her heart on printing, in order to save the expense of advertisements. She thanked me for my trouble, and so it ended; but what struck me was the cold selfishness of the tone. She never expressed the slightest interest in her old acquaintance, but went straight to her object, as if she had a full right to demand my assistance, and I were bound to give it.

Dear Mrs. Robert Dering! Never in my life have I had a greater shock than in hearing of her death, whilst myself confined to my bed; we had not met, but we had corresponded almost weekly, and there was about her letters a sweet affectionateness, a grace of heart

and mind, such as I have rarely seen equalled. It was a charm quite personal—a charm like the breath of flowers. She had been suffering from neuralgia, and her last letter to me was written in pencil. Then came her death. Hearing of your kindness about the climbing roses, she would send me some herself, so she went to another famous garden and desired the two best unnamed seedlings of last year, and two others, to be sent to me, the two former to be called the Miss Mitford and the Swallowfield; and there they are, dearest friend, mingled with your equally precious trees (none of either package has failed in spite of the unfavourable spring), there they are blossoming underneath the window, whilst the kind heart that sent them lies cold. Ah! take care of yourself, my precious friend!

Thank you a thousand times, my dear friend, for your most kind attention. I shall like the biscuits the better, as coming from you. Did I tell you I had had a visit from Grace Greenwood (alias Miss Sarah Clarke), whom Mrs. Browning calls an American Corinne, in yellow satin. It is strange how inferior the American ladies are to the men—even the highest of them, the Websters and Sedgwicks. They are not quite so bad as Margaret Fuller, but something in the same style,—"strong-minded women" is their phrase. You will find a specimen in the "Zenobia," of Mr. Hawthorne's new book, "The Blithedale Romance." The very nicest young American lady that I have ever known is now in England, Mrs. Wil-

lard, daughter of an eminent physician in Boston, and niece of the author of those fine works, "Palmyra" and "Rome." She is just exactly like a cultivated, accomplished, well-born, well-bred young Englishwoman, and her account of Margaret Fuller, whom she knew well, is most amusing. She says she was the most odious creature that ever lived: the most conceited and presuming. I suppose it is one of these strong-minded women (I forget her name) who has written "Uncle Tom's Cabin." Have you read it? It is much cried up, and has a sort of cleverness, but seemed to me so utterly disagreeable —more than disagreeable, painful—so one-sided, and so exaggerated that I stuck fast, and, having laid down the volume, am very unlikely to take it up again. I am getting slowly better, but continue exceedingly weak, and shall never, I suppose, regain the power of walking even to the end of my little garden. K. takes great care of me. Mr. May, our great provincial celebrity, comes to see me, even at ten o'clock at night, in spite of my remonstrances; and two most cultivated girls, of the highest talent, daughters of the late Sir Henry Russell, sit with me every day. They are full of playfulness, and really bring sunshine into the house. They live in a fine old mansion where Lord Clarendon wrote his "History." Can you tell me where to find the line, "A fellow feeling makes us wondrous kind?"

August 23rd, 1852.

Have you seen Mr. Kenyon's splendid volume, "A day at Tivoli?" My copy, printed upon drawing paper, and bound in green morocco, is the very perfection of beauty in every sense of the word. Gift books come swarming in this year. John Ruskin's "Seven Lamps of Architecture" began; then half-a-dozen sets from America, then some French books, then some Jewish, then some translations from the Danish, Swedish, and German, then another tribe of English works in prose and in verse. Your book will be almost like a grandchild of my own in point of interest. Before forgetting, have you read "King Arthur?" If not, do. I did not think it was in Bulwer to write anything so high toned, and so finely finished. It is almost Ariosto. Poor Lady Blessington!—Henry Chorley, who was almost a son of the house, and to whom I wrote to condole upon the event, said, after high praise of her energy, her brilliancy, and her kindness, "She was mercifully taken from the evil to come, for, in spite of the President's kindness, Paris would have crumbled under her as London did."—Well, I would not have been one of those strict ladies who drove the poor woman in her poverty and old age to die—whether of poison, or of that apoplexy which so often follows upon great anxiety and mental shocks, and used to be called a broken heart. I never visited her in her grandeur, but I would not have that want of charity to answer for; and (having a strong tendency to like Louis Napoleon) I rejoice to hear of his good conduct. I still think of Paris

when the cholera shall have gone, and, of course, dearest friend, I shall not go to Buckinghamshire when you are absent.

September 22nd, 1852.

I don't know whether I told you that three different persons are illustrating my "Recollections." One will be a most elaborate work; and Mr. Holloway, the great print-seller of Bedford Street, who is engaged to collect the portraits and views, brought me the first volume to look at to-day. It will be let into seven or eight volumes quarto, and will be one of the most valuable books of modern times, consisting of the rarest and choicest portraits, often very many of the same person, and always the best; the most curious old prints of places (for instance, there is not only an engraving two hundred years old of Donnington castle, but the very drawing from whence that engraving was made), and the most beautiful modern drawings made by artists sent on purpose. In short, everything that boundless expense, and taste, and skill can supply. I would not have believed that so rich a string of pearls could be tied together by so slight a thread. Now, what I have to ask of you is three autographs, dear love, please; for although doubtless less elaborate, I should like to help the other illustrators too; a stanza of one of your own poems, with the name and date. And now I have to ask if there be any print of you? if so, where it could be got? and if you know whether there be any print of Mrs. Southey? and whether we could get an

autograph of hers? I suppose the number of proper names, and of names of places, tempted to the honours my book is receiving. I wish you could see this illustrated book. It is most interesting. Did I tell you, that hearing a bad account of me, Mr. Harness came here from the Deepdene, found himself a lodging, and staid three weeks? We drove out every morning; then he went away to dinner, returning at eight o'clock, when Lady Russell and her daughters met him, and he read Shakespeare to us till bedtime. I never heard such a reader, and yet I have heard the best. This, and his delightful society, did me much good, but since he has returned to Mr. Hope's (a host worthy of such a guest), I have been worse again. It is low fever, which sometimes gets better, but will not go quite away. My dear old friend is coming back in November, and if anything can cure me, it will be his conversation and his kindness. You are all too good to me. God bless you, my dear friend.

October 8th, 1852.

I have never anything but thanks to send you, dearest friend; your basket is just arrived. The grapes are not only beautiful to look at, but delicious to taste, quite free from the over-sweetness, which some of the most famous grape-growers seem to cherish.

I wonder if your boys like riddles? They are good, I think, for children, and I used to find them pleasant. I transcribe, on the other page, one not in print, by

Catherine Fanshawe. Don't give a copy. It seems to me that the secret of this airy and graceful pleasantry, is well nigh lost. It will keep company with your autograph (when it arrives) in Mr. Dillon's splendid book. Love to Mr. Acton Tindal, and your dear people.

CHARADE.

Come, take your chair
And set it there,
Farther from the door.
Pray, pray,
Don't say nay,
Eat a little more!

My First is said,
My Second read,
My Third I'm sure you know—
It's Cousin Pat,
And Brother Mat,
Aunt Jane, and Uncle Joe.

Do you admire "Uncle Tom's Cabin," like all the world? I found it so painful, so exaggerated and one-sided, that I stuck fast at the first hundred pages, and shall certainly not open it again.

Jan. 29th, 1853.

Ah! my ever dear young friend, I have a bad bulletin to send you. Above six weeks ago, the week before Christmas, I was thrown violently out of my little pony-chaise upon the hard road, in Lady Russell's park; no bones were broken, but I fell upon the left hip and shoulder, and the principal

nerves of those joints were so much bruised and crushed that for five weeks I was obliged to have my arm bound tight to my body, and still the loss of muscular power in the lower limbs is such that I am lifted out of bed, lifted into bed, lifted up in bed—cannot turn when lying down, or stand up, or put one foot before another. Mr. May says that I must remain in my room till warm weather, for that if rheumatism supervenes upon this inability it will be very bad; but that when the Spring is fairly set in, and I can be wheeled out in a garden chair, I shall get gradually better. My arm is already improving, but between the shock to the system, and the injury to the nerves, and my being already so rheumatic and feeble a person, it has been far more serious than two or three broken bones. For the rest there are many things to be thankful for. Nobody was to blame. Nobody was hurt but myself, and the head and the right arm were quite unharmed, so that after the terrible pain abated a little, I could read and write almost as usual. K. is quite well again now, thank heaven, and I suppose that I am myself in the way to get very slowly well. I rejoice at all that you tell me of yourself and your boys; you are a wise mother. My friend, Mrs. ——, has two children, boy and girl, rather older than yours and she pushes the former, who is clever and unhealthy, so that when he went last summer to a preparatory school, he was far advanced in Greek, and now she is taking them abroad for fourteen months, that they may acquire the modern languages. The first letter her boy sent her from school ought to have been a lesson to her. He said,

"I have no comfort here, except in school time," and, instead of seeing how unhealthy and unnatural such a state was, she was proud of it. Mrs. Archer Clive has just published a poem with a touch of Scott's landscape power but the supernatural part I dislike. Truth, in poetry, is what lives. There will be a new and a great poet soon, Francis Bennoch. He is a dear friend of mine, a rich city man, the head of a great Manchester house, an eminent Common Councilman (I suppose he looks forward to representing the City, being a fine speaker). You will be charmed with his writings when he has time to put them together. There are two new American poets, perhaps three, for I have had some stanzas on the death of Daniel Webster—too good for Longfellow—but of which I do not even now know the writer. The principal American news is that Hawthorne, who, as a classfellow of the new President, and is his neighbour at Concord, is certainly to hold high office under the new government—four years ago he was literally starving. Mr. Bentley has written me three letters since I have been laid up, earnestly entreating for a second series of "Recollections;" so I suppose, in case Mr. May should allow of literary application, and if it please God to spare me, that I shall be that way engaged. At present Mr. May forbids all but letter writing, and does not like that. Mrs. Browning is now at Florence. I suppose they never heard there of her "Casa Guidi Windows." The most curious thing that I have heard in literature, is the delight with which Croker is reading "Moore's Life." If the poet writes of him, as I have often heard him talk, the old critic will not fail to come across some bits that will remove his enchant-

ment. But I suppose Lord John, although he has left so much that is said of the tuft-hunting propensities of his hero, has not failed to follow the old Whig policy by using his foes better than his friends. After all, that book, and "Theodore Hook's Life," the one of a good man, the other of a bad, are standing lessons against the odious vanity that bows talent at the feet of rank. Just before I was ill I had a visit from a grandson of Archdeacon Wrangham. Do you know anything of him—a clever boy, who amused me by his precocious estimate of literature as a *trade?*

Don't you like the Emperor's marriage? it seems to me the finest homage that I have known to woman and to love. But he is almost as great a poet as his uncle.

I, too, once saw a real yew avenue,* probably 700 or 800 years old, across a down in Hampshire. A gloomy twilight was coming on, with a hollow wind, and the effect was most spectral.

February 14th, 1853.

I do assure you, my very dear friend, that I have no conviction more settled than that Mr. Lucas is the best living portrait painter—the one who approaches nearest to Sir Joshua of any since his death. This faith is shared by the best judges.

* Miss Mitford replies, in this sentence, to a description I had given her of the effect of a fine avenue of Irish yews, standing in the grounds at Elvaston Castle, near Derby—the seat of the Earl of Harrington.—Mrs. A. T.

The Duke of Wellington sat to him above sixty times, and preferred him to all others. Sir Robert Peel chose him to finish the Gallery of Contemporary Statesmen, begun by Lawrence. The Duke of Devonshire says his best modern portrait is the posthumous portrait of Lady Burlington, by John Lucas. He has just finished a portrait of Joseph Hume, subscribed for by nearly all the members of the late House of Commons. He has painted well nigh all our nobility, and latterly has been the chosen artist of that new nobility, the great engineers, having painted old George Stephenson, and Robert Stephenson, and other compeers, oftener than I care to tell. Mr. Holloway, the great printseller, said to me "He is our best portrait painter." Partly from modesty, partly from pride, he has always held back from the canvassing needful for the Academy, and still further aloof from the degrading patronage of that which we call the Press, so that he is something like the great Scotch portrait painter Saunders, with his pictures in every great house, and his name in no newspaper.

I am told that a rich Catholic gentleman, Mr. H——, is in despair at the Imperial marriage. He had fallen desperately in love with the beautiful Countess de Teba last summer, when he was called to England by his father's illness; the father died, and he was just about to cross the Channel, and lay himself and 40,000*l.* a-year at her feet, when Louis Napoleon forestalled him. This story came from my friend, Mr. B——, and I have no doubt of its truth; for those leading English Catholics always know all about one another.

I am getting on towards amendment they say, but very slowly. I can just stand, and manage to drag one foot after another, for a yard or two, but that is all. However, I hope for better days when Spring sets in. Adieu, dearest friend.

I have heard from Mr. Ouvry to day; he speaks of you as a great acquisition. Do make acquaintance with her, you will find her a most intelligent, cheerful, kind, good young woman, whom you are sure to like.

March 11th, 1853.

Mr. Lucas wrote me yesterday a charming sketch of the picture he is painting. He is enamoured of both his sitters, especially the "skittish boy" (that's his word), who is, he says, the loveliest little creature ever seen. It will be a most interesting picture, and so will the companion. I have just been reading Mr. Justice Talfourd's new play, printed, not published, and only ten or twelve copies given away. It is on a Spanish story, with very nice writing indeed, quite Ion-ish. I have just had a letter from a lady who was staying at St. Cloud, with one of the Empress's ladies of honour. Her Imperial Majesty shot thirteen brace of partridges one morning; but, adds my friend, "Any man may be in love with her."

March 20th, 1853.

Your packet arrived this morning, and I have just sent it off, having read it very attentively and with great interest. You must remember that the Magnolia Grandiflora (for I take for granted that you mean that queenly flower) never blossoms till August, and that there are no nightingales in Devonshire. I myself introduced Sir William Elford, the great Devonshire ornithologist, who had painted almost every English bird, to that most delicious of songsters at our old house,* where you and I first became acquainted. But these are trifles, the life is there and the power, and I have faith in you. Avoid description as much as possible, and get as much as you can of action and of story, and write up your dialogue: put character into what the people say. The old lord is excellent. I wish I could help you about Catholic novels, but I never look at a modern novel, more rarely still at a theological one. The only Catholic tales I know are Mrs. Inchbald' exquisite "Simple Story," and Miss Agnew's "Geraldine," and the real life practices are only to be got by your own questioning. Any Catholic priest will help you. Let me hear that you receive the packet safely.

I have been correcting "My Recollections" for a cheaper edition. What you tell me of Mr. Lucas's picture is just what I expected. I knew you would be more than pleased. God bless you, dear friend; say everything for me to your dear people.

I have no time to talk of Mr. Justice Talfourd's

* Grazeley Lodge, formerly Bertram House.

new tragedy: it is more like "Ion" than anything he has done.

March 30th, 1853.

You will see by the enclosed that I have not neglected your commission, although my success has been but indifferent. However, to-day I have seen Lady Russell, who has been to London, *faire ses Pâques*, as they used to say in Madame de Sevigne's time, and she says she is sure there must be books that will give what is wanted. I can furnish you with a curious piece of Roman Catholic statistics; talking about Lady C—— and her daughters, of whom there are nine, I asked how many sons? the answer was either "three," or "four." I think "three," with this observation appended, "That is the usual proportion between male and female in all the great English Catholic families." You are sure? said I. "Positive," was the rejoinder. "The convents absorb some, and a few marry, what becomes of the rest is as great a puzzle as the destiny of old governesses." Now, what struck me was the strangeness of the original disproportion. What there should be in the Roman Catholic gentry of England to induce so much greater a production of daughters than sons? I myself greatly like the English Catholics, whom I have happened to know. They are generally high-bred, learned, with much suavity of manner, and far greater tolerance, as far as I have seen, than most of their Protestant neighbours. The speech which I also enclose you will like for its subject;

nothing, I think, can be in better taste than the allusions.

The speaker (who is also the writer of the charming poem on Ireland) is a dear friend of mine, the head * of a great Manchester house, and a man who makes the noblest use of a large fortune honourably acquired. He is the Providence of artists and authors —half kept poor Haydon; is doing the same by Jerdan; has Charles Swain at this moment in his house, having assured to his wife and children— mostly from himself—1,000*l.* to supply their wants till the poor poet's health be sufficiently restored to work at his trade of an ornamental engraver. The last I heard of him was an assertion that something must be done for poor Bailey ("Festus"), which probably means doing it out of his own pocket. The praise of such a man is worth having, to say nothing of his being a most genial and delightful person, full of talent and information. Adieu, dearest friend.

I am so glad to find that the pictures are progressing to your heart's content.

P. S.—The more I think of the novel, the better I like it.

May 18th, 1853.

I do not remember any Dulcibella Vardy amongst our connections, although I have a dim recollection of having heard the name Vardy somewhere. The queer Christian name would make her belonging to

* Mr. Bennoch.

the Mitfords, all the more likely—seeing that we had amongst us Keturahs, Josephas, Kezias, and Dorothys, Tabithas, and Sybils being common family names of our clan. These odious appellations seem to haunt me. My faithful maid, K., rejoices in the name of Kerenhappuch; we have just parted with a niece of hers called Lavinia. Of the Dulcibella in question I know nothing, and what is worse, I don't know where to ask,—all my relations having died off. This weather keeps me still confined; certainly there never was such—the hedges are all brown—one day it snows, another it rains, every night it freezes; the nightingales won't sing, and even the cuckoo holds his peace. I do long for the sun, and almost as much I long for a good two hours' talk with you, and to hear all about you. Three or four young ladies, readers of religious tales, have all given the same answer to your question about Catholic usages, that the best, and perhaps only, account is to be found in "Father Clement," which I dimly remember as a book too false in its general impression to be accurate in anything. However, it is short, and easily procured, so you had better read it. Adieu, dear love.

June 9th, 1853.

I can never thank you half enough, dearest friend, for your unwearied kindness and attention—a kindness all the greater, that this wet winter and ungenial Spring have made both plants and chickens rarities hereabout. Thank you, dear friend, again and again.

I trust that your own Manor House is increasing in the beauty that you love to give, and ought to enjoy. This has been a year of years for flowering trees, lilacs, rhododendrons, azaleas, wisterias, horse-chestnuts. Have you the scarlet horse-chestnut? and does it grow kindly and blossom freely. When it does so, I really think that it is the most gorgeous of English trees, clothed in those rich red pyramidal flowers, but it has bad tricks,—it dies, it dwarfs off, it refuses to blossom. And have you the pink lily of the valley?—less pretty than the white, but still charming—and the straw-colour, have you that? I heard of it the other day, at Lord Charlemont's place, in Ireland. Lady Russell, who brought the pink variety from Paris just after the Coronation of Charles X., and after its blowing for a year or two lost it. She says that she had a blue one. No doubt the French florist called it blue, but I suspect, on cross-examination that, like so many *soi disant* blue flowers, it was lilac. I only see the flowers that come to me, for although with great difficulty and great pain, I am lifted somehow downstairs and into my little pony carriage, I am so enfeebled, that to go otherwise than a foot's pace through our lanes, causes me pain all over the body for days after, just as if I had been beaten, and pleasant company—the pleasanter the worse—has just the same effect as a quick drive, and leaves me full of pain and weariness. Nevertheless, Mr. May says that air will act as a tonic on the long run, and that there is a chance of my getting stronger, so I am looking out for an old-fashioned Bath chair, in which I may be drawn, under a tree, and left there to read or write without

fatigue. How goes on the book? This Oxford week reminds me of it, never will it be better described. And how proceeds the picture? I am so sure that it will be all your heart can wish.

A day or two ago I had a letter, not quite anonymous, sent to me through Mr. Kenyon, suggesting subjects for more Recollections. Amongst the rest, the poems of the late Lady Nugent.* Are they published, or in MS., and are they worth having? for amongst many of the best writers my correspondents mingled a few of the worst—now, you are to be trusted. Adieu, dearest friend. Say everything for me to all your dear people, not forgetting Mr. Lucas.

November 17th, 1853.

Thank you heartily, dearest friend, for your most kind and affectionate inquiries. This weather is terrible to me, bringing pain into every limb, from the knee to the hip, and the elbow to the shoulder. I am not confined to my bed, because I will not be so as long as I can possibly leave it; but I am glued to my chair, and cannot move my hands except downward, not being able to snuff a candle, and being generally compelled to hold my ink in my left hand, because I cannot lift the right high enough to

* Anne Lucy, daughter of the Hon. Major-General Vere Poulett, and wife of George Grenville, Baron Nugent, of the Lillies, near Aylesbury, whose name occurs in this series of Miss Mitford's letters. This accomplished lord and lady occasionally contributed to the periodicals of the day; but the best known of their writings are Lord Nugent's "Life of Hampden," and "The Legends of the Library at Lillies," by the lord and lady there.

dip my pen in if it stands on the table. In the midst of all this Mr. Bennoch persuaded me to undertake a collected edition of my dramatic works (two volumes, of four hundred pages each), with a long preface—far more an autobiography than the "Recollections,"—and besides this, to write—that is, to compose—a new tale*, almost a novel, for a separate work, which is to come out at the same time. This, as you may imagine, my dear friend, will keep me hard at work until it be printed, which will hardly be till May or June, for I am faithful to my old creed of doing my best, and shall write every line three times over with my own hand. This place is not so solitary as you think it. Scarcely a week passes but some London friend comes purposely to spend three or four hours with me. My friend, Lady Russell, calls every day, and her young people keep us well off for news—besides many other kind neighbours; so that, with books, and the "Times," and letters full store, I do quite well. Yesterday Miss Shee (sister to Sir G. Shee and Mrs. R. Dering, one of your sister poetesses) spent the afternoon with me, and was talking of you, and of the pleasure the "Infant Bridal" had given to her poor sister. I hope, dearest friend, that you will write many poems as charming as that.—It would be difficult to write anything better. You must ask Mr. Lucas about Mr. Bennoch. They have made acquaintance and taken a mutual fancy to each other. I know nobody like Mr. Bennoch for talent or for character. I have been

* "Atherton." The plot of this tale, however—as I have said—had been long lying by in Miss Mitford's mind, as a thing to be written out some day.—C.

seeing a good deal, this summer, of Mr. Kingsley and his sweet wife. He is a delightful person; so is Mr. Willmott, the critic of the "Times." I liked one of those Greek pictures in the extracts from Mr. Arnold's poems, and, not having seen the volume, was glad to meet with so much. Whenever we foregather, I will tell you much of Edgar Poe. He had a thousand chances, and forfeited them all. I like the stories on circumstantial evidence better than the poems, and the "Bells" better than the "Raven." Adieu, dearest friend.

Feb. 20th, 1854.

I thank you, my beloved friend, for your enclosure; but I write with so much difficulty that I cannot talk of it now as I should like to do. For four months I have been in a terrible state—just got from my bed to the fireside, I hardly know how, for every time I expect to be the last. Unable to rise from my seat, to stand for a moment, to lift either foot from the ground, and when lifted into bed again, unable to turn or to move the least in the world, lying on my back like a log. The influenza came on, and my life was saved by two table-spoonfuls of champagne in water twice a day, which I am still compelled to take. Indeed it is nourishment that keeps me alive. The moment that power goes I shall sink. In this state was nearly all "Atherton" written;—in the midst of the tremendous pain of rheumatism in every limb, in the loins, and, above all, in the chest, and with such loss of power that I am obliged to have my pen

dipped in the ink for me, not being able to raise my hand. All writing, except the necessary correction of proofs, is forbidden; but I could not help one line to you, my dear and most kind friend. May God bless you all!

May 29th, 1854.

I do indeed wish that I were near enough for a warm, hearty kiss from your dear lips upon my poor old cheek. It would do me good; and good your dear letter has done me, with all its quick sympathy and its true feeling. This success has been most unexpected and most gratifying to me. The book was written exactly as I represented, but written with even more than my usual care, three times over; and ever since I have continued as ill as possible—just as I represented—unable to stand for one moment, to lift up either foot, to move in my chair or in bed when lifted back there, too weak to be more than wrapped in shawls and cloaks, unable to get on even a dressing-gown, and obliged to have my pen dipped in the ink when writing. This weakness causes me to be so exhausted by visitors that, except one or two friends, everybody is shut out. It is the spine that was injured, as Mr. May has always known, although he never told me so till lately. Well, my dear, ask me no more about my health, for it is most irksome to write about, and I have nobody to write for me, my very excellent servants not liking to do that, and doing so much for me otherwise that I cannot bear to worry them. The success has been most

genuine. Mudie told Mr. Hurst, last week, that the demand was such that he was compelled to have four hundred copies in circulation; and besides the press, the letters I receive would astonish you. The "Dramatic Works," ready last autumn, are to be published in August.

July 20th, 1854.

I am too ill to read new books or talk about them, having grown weaker and weaker, and not been in bed for above a fortnight; but I thank the authoress,* nevertheless, who has given cause to your charming letter. I wonder that I did not hear of her before, for I know old Lady Aylmer very well, she stays some weeks, every year, at Lady Russell's, and has only just left her; and though I was too ill to see Lady Aylmer, perpetual messages passed between us. Your letter is most interesting. Our family is in the same category with that of your kinsmen, the Sandfords. At Mitford, near Morpeth, are the splendid remains of an old Roman castle, the keep on an artificial mound between two fords of the Wansbeck, which nearly surrounds it, whence some antiquarians derive the name—Midford; and in the same village an old Tudor gateway, or rather gate-house, and a modern mansion, all belonging to the head of our family, Admiral Osbaldistone Mitford. I believe there are very few untitled houses of equal antiquity. In the local histories some members of

* Mrs. Robert Cartwright, the accomplished musician, and authoress of "Christabelle," &c.

it are perpetually found, in every variety of spelling, as high sheriffs or knights of the shire. God grant prosperity to you—all that can make your boys prosperous, and gladden their parents' hearts!

You will like to hear the success of "Atherton" in America. Mr. Fields, the great Boston publisher, writes me that the "newspapers and periodicals are outvying each other in words of praise, and that no book, for many years, has been received with such an outburst of applause." I hope it is not wrong to be gratified by this warmth of feeling, even in my present condition. My "Dramatic Works" are to be published on the 25th.

And now, my beloved friend, farewell! What is become of Mrs. ——? I have not heard a word of her during this long illness. Tell her that I thought of her, and wished her well.

August 24th, 1854.

Up to the very last, my beloved friend, how kind you are! Kinder, I think, than anybody, and that is saying much. I met with a little poem of yours in a six-months'-old magazine ("Fraser's," I think) the other night, and felt proud as a grandmother would do of the stanzas; but I am far prouder of *you*. The grapes have arrived—infinitely the finest-flavoured that I have tasted.

I am gradually, but steadily declining. My beloved friend, Hugh Pearson, the Vicar of Sonning, who is just gone abroad with Arthur Stanley, having staid over the Monday to administer the sacrament

to me, is returning certainly earlier than he meant—that is to say, in three weeks—(it was very difficult to get him to go at all) in the hope of seeing me again when he comes back. I tell you this, as he told it me; but God is very gracious, and it is in his hands; and, humanly speaking, I have revived since he went, in consequence of a change of diet. So the present revival may last longer than Hugh Pearson, in his affection, expected. He is a most admirable young man—not an author, but the chosen friend of many of the greatest, and the man of the finest taste that I have ever known. As a clergyman, he is unrivalled for largeness, tenderness, and charity—just exactly a younger Dr. Arnold. I went to him for comfort, and he has been to me an unspeakable consolation. I have all along felt that this visitation was sent by the Gracious Father, who has been so good to me through life, as His crowning mercy. May He grant me grace not to throw away the opportunity. I know that you will pray for me, my dear friend. Pray that He may grant me true repentance and stedfast faith—a quicker, a more lively faith. I, unworthy though I be, will pray for you and for your children. May He bless you all!

I am so glad about the sketch.* Tell dear John Lucas so. It would have commanded a large sum in America; and I am so glad you mentioned the Receipt-book. Sam (he is my librarian, not his wife) has rummaged out an old black book, written at both ends, blank in the middle, partly Latin, and very curious. I take for granted that is the one

* An admirable likeness, in crayons, of herself, presented by the artist (Mr. John Lucas) to Mrs. Acton Tindal.

which I thought had gone back to you many years ago. It shall be sent the first time Sam goes to Reading. I heard of the Gores the other day, through a neighbour—a kind message.—Thank Mrs. Marsh earnestly for hers. Tell her that, independently of the high literary merit of the authoress of "Two Old Men's Tales," I have learnt to esteem and respect her through Miss ——. Everybody is most kind—too kind. Say to John Lucas and your own dear people all that is most loving. God bless you all! Write to me again.

I have not been in bed for six weeks from mere exhaustion. A struggle for breath was brought on one night when a friend, who came from Germany a year before he intended, that he might see me once again, had stayed with me two hours; so now, to avoid that fatigue, that risk, I sit night and day in an easy-chair, on a water-cushion, sometimes propped by air-cushions, sometimes with my feet up.

Sept. 10th, 1854.

I am so glad, my very dear friend, that dear John Lucas's sketch is with *you*, where it is so affectionately cared for, and where it looks on one whom I love so well, and should be so glad to look upon with my living eyes. His other picture was so badly engraved (I mean that in America); and that horrible print from Haydon's is so utterly unlike, not only me, but the picture from which it professes to be taken, that if my life and letters be published (as

they publish everybody's now), I presume they will have to come to you for the portrait. There is, indeed, one admirable copy of John Lucas's picture: Mr. Bennoch had half-a-dozen photographs taken, and one of these has been coloured by an eminent artist. You would not know it from a very fine miniature, and I cannot help thinking that this style will make its way. How the artist (I don't know his name) managed I can't tell, for Mr. Bennoch gave Lady Russell one of the photographs, and K——, my faithful maid, another, and though of course like, as taken from that magnificent portrait, nothing could be more unpleasant or unpromising; they had each a black eye.

When I say, "*revived*," dearest friend, I do not mean any actual difference of condition—for *the* great change may arrive any day—but the pleasant amelioration (for which I am most thankful to His mercy) still continues, and is certainly owing, under Providence, to the present admirable treatment of persons in my state.

What a charming anecdote is that of your sick boy!—sick, I hope, no longer. They seem both glorious fellows. God grant you happiness in them!

Those letters * must be very interesting. I know a whole tribe of Clives. Archer Clive, the husband of the poetess, is a very charming person. They are

* The large, inedited correspondence of the Rev. Richard Gifford, M.A., of Baliol Coll., Oxford; rector of North Ockington, Essex, and vicar of Duffield, county Derby, who died in 1807, aged eighty-two. Miss Mitford refers especially here to letters addressed to Mr. Gifford by the Ven. Robert Clive, rector of Moreton, prebendary of Westminster, and archdeacon of Salop, between the years 1760 and 1792.

all rich. Whoever has the looking over my letters will find them interesting—I mean the letters *to* me. The other day, I received one, most delightful, from a worker in a Bradford factory, not a poet or an author, but a lover of scenery and of books. He is a single man, and saves in eleven months of the year to gain a holiday every summer, which he seems to enjoy as you would do. He had intended to come to Bristol in an excursion train, and from thence by the Great Western here; but an order came unexpectedly to the mill where he works, which has cheated him of this year's holiday. The same post bought some lines from a young poet, who had picked up a volume of my early poems with some lines written by me on the fly-leaf—a monody on Mrs. Valpy, which I had quite forgotten, but had, of course, copied for some friend in that place. It was signed, and dated (Bertram House) between forty and fifty years ago. Think how this carried me back to old times! Every week things like this occur. God bless you, my very dear friend!

October 2nd, 1854.

I rejoice to receive news of you which is, on the whole, happy and good; and I hasten to answer it with my own hand, because it will probably be my last letter to a very kind and valued friend. I mean to say that nothing is (humanly speaking) more unlikely than my being alive some months hence, and that daily letters are perhaps the heaviest tax I pay to so large an acquaintance. Since the daily

inquirers are, with very few exceptions, shut out; Miss J—— has often told me of you. She or Miss H—— could have told you the story of my illness. As it is, I must ask you to get "Atherton" from some circulating library, the preface to which book contains the history of my state up to last March. After that I began to sink rapidly; and about four months ago, on a friend's coming from Germany on purpose to see me once again, I was so much excited and fatigued by a visit of two hours, that, on being lifted into bed, I was seized, from pure exhaustion, with such a struggle for breath, that K—— and her excellent husband thought it was the last:—since which time that risk has been avoided, and I have sitten day and night in one chair and a water-cushion, with no other change than sometimes propping my back with air-cushions, and sometimes putting up my feet in another chair. For two or three months my death was expected from day to day, and from hour to hour. The dear friend who administered the sacrament to me took leave—a final leave, both thought—because he was going a short tour; and William Harness, my executor, sent me his plan for my funeral. I do not believe that there is any real change in my condition, although the symptoms are improved. I am still incapable of being lifted into bed, or moved in any way; and, doubtless, the first shake of the old tree will cause the fall of the poor withered leaf. I am already wasted to a skeleton. With all this, I have seen great alleviation. It has pleased God to spare not only such faculties as were originally vouchsafed to me, but my affections, my sympathies, and my cheer-

fulness—nay, even the interest in daily trifles, which adds so much to the healthy joy of life. I still love books and flowers, and look with pleasure on the tall elms waving across the calm blue sky. My neighbours are most attentive, my friends most kind. Strangers from all countries join them in crowding the little court with visits of enquiry, and the postman groans under my daily letters. Besides Mr May's and Mr. Pearson's invaluable friendship, Lady Russell comes to me every day like a sister, and K—— and Sam nurse me just as if I were their mother. You would hardly believe how real and unwearied all this kindness is—much of it from persons the most distinguished in every way. I often wonder how I have deserved such goodness. Let me add, that I believe the whole visitation has been sent in mercy, to draw me closer to God. We are all apt to be negligent on the one hand, or to enquire too curiously on the other; but during these months of feebleness I have been reading the New Testament in the spirit (at least I tried to do so) with which it was first heard, taking that divine history just as it is written. I am now reading the Gospels for the third time, with a calm conviction, and a fearful, trembling, humble hope, trusting only in God's mercy, and believing that mercy will be extended to all who seek it, under whatever sect they may be gathered, provided they seek it in sincerity. I tell you this as a dear and trusted friend, and because it is a faith to avow, and not to conceal; but you may well imagine that I neither preach myself nor deal in holy gossip of any sort. Amongst the many sunbeams which illume my sick chamber, none are

brighter than the letters which arrive from America. I think that within the last ten days I have had letters and messages from every author of note in the States (always excepting Mrs. Stowe, whose book I never read). "Atherton," admirably got up, is selling there by tens of thousands; and if you see John Lucas, I wish you would tell him, with my love, that the fine picture which I gave to Mr. Fields has been engraved there—they tell me admirably—and prefixed to the work. At least twenty letters and notices speak of it as quite bearing out the personal feeling for me which these unknown friends of mine entertain.

* * * * *

Oct. 19th, 1854.

It is indeed a most valuable life. Her letters give me the impression that she is worse than those around her think, and that she tries not to think herself worse than they suppose—tries to deceive herself, whilst there is an internal feeling that warns her of her danger. Should not her physician remove that blindness from the poor husband and the parents? My sweet young married friend, Mrs. Kingsley, is now in Devonshire for the same cause. Her husband told me, when she was last at Eversley, about a month ago, that she had had three attacks in the last twelvemonth. She passed the winter at Torquay, and this summer and autumn in the north of Devonshire, and is to remain two years longer, if it please God to spare her. That would be Mrs. Ouvry's best

chance; and there is a great similarity of position—each with a most attached husband, to whom she is a devoted wife; each married to a clergyman; each the mother of three children. I love Mrs. Ouvry, and both the Kingsleys. He is a fine, noble, generous creature, and she a devoted and warm-hearted wife. —Poor Mrs. Southey! her marriage was a mistake; but certainly did not deserve to be so severely visited upon her.

To-day's post brought me a great curiosity—a letter from Mrs. W——, miserably selfish and repining. She talks of her ill health—to talk of ill health to me!!!—and bemoans the death of her mother, because it will throw the care of her father upon herself!!! Also she bemoans herself, and indeed accuses herself for not having exerted herself in literary labours. Poor thing! she is a warning against spoiling children. How is Mrs. B——? How many little ones has she? I am as when I wrote last—better one day, worse the next, but with many alleviations. God is very merciful. May He shed his blessings upon you and yours, my beloved friend.

Nov. 21st, 1854.

How more than kind you and your dear people are to me. I never thought to taste turkey again. But I must take a bit of dear Mrs. Harrison's present. I do believe that there is in good wishes, in such thorough and affectionate good will, a healing power. In that faith I shall eat, and it will do me good. Since I wrote last I have been a good deal worse;

but I am now a little better, and full of hope for your book. Get the whole story so firmly fixed in your head, that every page may tend to its development; and let it be cheerful, and end happily. It is wonderful how many people are guided by that in reading novels. I myself seldom look again at a book that makes one unhappy. John Ruskin won't read a work of fiction until he is certain of a happy conclusion; and Charles Kingsley, whose own works are dismal enough, has the same crotchet. Mr. and Mrs. Browning's books are advancing towards completion: they have been in hand these three years. His are lyrics, of which she has only seen some; hers a fictitious autobiography in blank verse, of which he has not seen one word, though four thousand lines are written—a strange reserve! Poor Lady Russell's eldest son is in the Grenadier Guards before Sebastopol. She passes her time in tears and prayer, and is ten years older since the battle of the Alma. How our affairs are mismanaged! My friend Mr. Bennoch passed an evening last week in company with Kossuth and some Hungarian officers, who know the place. They gave high praise to our brave troops, but said that the absolute want of strategic skill among the leaders was something incredible. They are all rashness, and think only of killing the men in front of them. God bless you, my beloved friend.

Letters to Mrs. Ouvry.

Three Mile Cross, ——, 1847.

Ah! dearest Mrs. Ouvry, I know as well as if I were a clergyman's wife in my own person, all the flannel petticoating and blanketing of the Christmas season. It is the prime duty of a country gentlewoman; and really this year the most that could be done for the poor people has fallen so far short of their wants, that homely as the task is it has been welcome to one's feelings, as all that one can feel sure of being useful (for a great deal of what passes for goodness is not so certain) always is just or best. I can well conceive that in a London parish, just installed, and not knowing familiarly either the sick or the poor, the job must have assumed an appearance half ludicrous in the midst of its sad importance. Are you likely to stay in town? I do hope to be there for a week or two in the season, that is to say, the end of May or the beginning of June, and very glad should I be if I could expect to meet you there and to be introduced to Mr. Ouvry; you must make my best compliments to Mr. and Mrs. Nicholls, your own people, and my old neighbours also. The ——'s are still at Cheltenham, the ——'s going away for three years. This, I think, is all the country news. The people who know Mr. Browning well seem to

like him much. Mr. Kenyon, Mr. Chorley, Mr. Harness—and it is so much my interest to think well of him, and his dear wife writes of him so magnificently, that I hope in time to forgive even his stealing her away. I confess, however, quite between ourselves, that I can't make out his poetry. Do you ever meet in society a very charming young man, Mr. Ruskin, the author of some very fine works on art, by an Oxford graduate? He is quite delightful.

Three Mile Cross, April 11, 1847.

I have been hoping, dearest Mrs. Ouvry, to be able to say when I should be in London, somewhere towards the end of May, or the beginning of June, and to ascertain if there were any chance of seeing you there; but even that distant hope becomes uncertain in consequence of my having been for the last month half crippled with rheumatism of the hips. I hope it may go off, but if it do not I see no prospect of my getting to town; for although I do hobble about with the aid of a stick, it is in such a fashion as one could not do except in one's own country. As I said, I have some hope of getting better, a hope founded principally on my great number of fellow sufferers. I cannot but comfort myself with thinking that by and by the real spring will come (for at present we have it only in name), and that with the advent of the primroses and violets we may regain the power of walking about to look after them; in that case, I still hope to get to the great city. And what is your intention? Is Mr. Ouvry

tired of his London cure? and are you really contemplating a rural residence? We have had a perpetual change of vicars lately, and it would have been a great consolation if we could have hoped for any arrangement that would have placed you within a mile. But I don't think that you would like a country parish, or rather I don't think that you could dispense with the London society to which you are accustomed, and which you are so well calculated to adorn. Did you ever hear of the name of Thomas Davis, a young Irishman, who died lately, and of whom there is a magnificent eulogium by W. Carleton, in a recent number of "Duffy's Irish Library?" He seems to have been a very striking person. And have you met with a clever book (quite the other way in politics) called the "Falcon Family?" And do you know who is the author?

Thank you heartily, dearest Mrs. Ouvry, for your kind information respecting Mr. Savage, and Thomas Davis. I become more and more interested about Mr. Davis, as I hear more and more of him, and read more and more of his productions. I have just been reading some of his chaming ballads in "Duffy's Irish Ballads," and rejoice to find that I can procure all his poems, and many of his prose works in that publication, as well as a selection of Irish songs by different writers. What immense progress these little books show—what an absence of the old Irish faith. I know nothing more deliciously simple

than Griffin's "Gille Machree," and Banim's "Sog-garth Aroon,"—(forgive false spelling; one is not bound to know Irish),—and the success of the collection (I have seen the sixth edition, some were sold in four weeks) is a still better symptom. As to Mr. Savage,* no doubt when you meet him as a married lady, he will find something better to talk to you about than the stars. I have known many clever men talk very carelessly to pretty young ladies, especially when there were two or three together, however great their reputation for talent and accomplishment might be. Have not you ever guessed this yourself? It is your destiny to have people talking their best to you now be very sure of that, and no doubt Mr. Savage's best must be very amusing. The "Falcon Family" is a delightful piece of fun, and what you tell me of his mother-in-law and sister-in-law is most interesting. I cannot get Thomas Davis out of my head, and have been writing a long account of him to Mrs. Browning. You need not be afraid of M. A. Dumas being either over proper or over dull. I would not answer for the propriety of any of his writings, but they are always entertaining. He himself is doubtless a sensible coxcomb. I like of all his works his Louis XIV. best, also his little life of Napoleon, and his "Impressions de Voyage." But he is infinitely various, and always above mediocrity. If you want to read one of his serious works you would be interested by his "Chevalier de Maison Rouge," a very fine account of Marie Antoinette. Can you tell me anything of "Nibley Green," or, rather, of its

* Writer of "The Falcon Family," and other modern satirical novels, something in the style of Peacock.

author? Some of his short poems are charming. I am still very lame, but live in hopes of fine weather. Heaven bless you, dear Mrs. Ouvry, say everything for me to Mr. Ouvry, and Mr. and Mrs. Nicholls.

Three Mile Cross, August 9, 1847.

I begin one of my letters of scraps, dearest Mrs. Ouvry, to tell you that your having left London tended to lessen my regrets—to give me a regret the less at not being able to go there this season myself. My lameness continues with such obstinacy, that I was compelled to abandon the idea of a journey which, however pleasureable, is always fatiguing; the chance of perfect recovery being not to over exert the muscles whilst the affection continues. A most kind friend has lent me a pony-chaise for a short time, and I already begin to find the advantage of air without very long walks, although the weather has been most unfavourable since my little maid (my driver) and I have had our equipage. So you are at Leighton-Buzzard! I have always felt that there was something striking and mysterious in the name,* something that arrested the attention. Have you the living? or a neighbouring living? or is Mr. Ouvry the curate? I think you would take a great interest in a living of his where you were likely to remain some time, and where the schools and poor people would be your own schools and your own poor. My time has been too much filled up with

* The name is a popular version of "Leighton Beaudesert."

duties of another sort, and now I am too old to begin a course of activity of that kind; but where it is healthful, and genial, and cheerful, and helpful, as it would be sure to be in your case, I can fancy nothing more satisfactory. Of course I do not mean a fussy interference with everything and everybody, but the rational advice and assistance which is perhaps the greatest blessing that poor people can receive. For my own part, I look upon the education question to be the very greatest of any, and I believe that finally it will end (not yet, perhaps) in a large general measure upon Dr. Hook's plan, although everything has been retarded by the folly of the Dissenters, or rather I suppose the love of power of their ministers. The most gifted amongst them are wiser, witness a charming pamphlet by Mr. Binney, and the opinions of Dr. Vaughan, and of my own dear friend Mr. B——. Have you read two charming volumes called "The Lost Senses," in Charles Knight's series? The account that the author, Dr. Kitto, gives of his own deafness is most striking; and "From Oxford to Rome," have you read that? and do you know, what is certainly true, that it is the work of a girl of twenty-four, the daughter of a dissenting minister at Wallingford? This is remarkable on account of the intimacy of the details which makes it almost impossible not to believe it the work of an Oxford man, but there is no doubt of the fact. It is wonderful that having been to Rome from Oxford she should go back to Oxford again; she will hardly stay there I think. The books that I have been reading most have been all Mr. Duffy's Irish Library, and every book about Ireland that I

could pick up. I have finished by the greatest possible enthusiasm for Gerald Griffin, a poet, for beauty of sentiment and exquisite feeling of melody, second to none in the language. Do you know his "Hollow Side Tales," and the "Invasion?" I am longing to read them. His other works I know, and I think "The Collegians" one of the finest novels ever written. Thomas Davis has written some very fine verse—"The Sack of Baltimore," "My Grave," are full of beauty, and it is quite wonderful how such a faculty could have lain dormant until *wanted* for the nation. How is his *fiancée?* I shall always feel the strongest interest in her—and is Mr. Savage writing again? Oh! and can you tell me if "Gille" in Griffin's "Gille Machree," is one syllable or two? and if the G in the same word is hard. One wants an Irish scholar when reading these poems.

Three Mile Cross, Sept. 8, 1847.

Ah, my dearest Mrs. Ouvry, how glad I should be to live at Leighton-Buzzard (there's a charming mystery in the name), and be an occasional sharer in your drives—partly, I confess, for the pony-chaise, but far more for the companion. Well, if we cannot talk one way, it is as well to have a chat the other. I am so glad that you give Miss Edgeworth's stories to your school. It seems to me such a mistake to weary poor children of religion. About a year and a half ago a friend commissioned me to get some linen made—a large quantity, for a long voyage. I went to a charity school in Reading, which used to

be famous for needle-work, and requested the mistress to get it done, at a liberal price, by a certain time. "Dear me, ma'am," said the woman, "I wish we could; but we're forced to go to church four times a day during Lent, and whenever the bells ring at other times. It's a sad change," said the woman, "and does the children no good, I assure you." Just such a mistake made dear Gerald Griffin in his own case, when he exchanged his poet-mission to shut himself up in a monastery at Cork. Do read his life and letters. It is a romance, like that of Crabbe, only that the character was far more high-toned. He was three days in London actually without food, because he would not encroach on the means of his family, and would not accept the assistance of Banim. All that quarrel is (what few quarrels are) most honourable to those eminent Irishmen. I have at last read "Gisippus,"* that really wonderful play, written in his, Gerald Griffin's, twentieth year, and with more in it of the style of Fletcher than any other modern drama; and there are bits in his prose writings better even than the "Collegians;" for instance, the lesson on Virgil in the "Rivals," which is matchless as translation and as character. He was a very great man and a great poet; and Banim's "Father Connell" is also a far finer thing than any of his more famous novels. It is "Soggarth Aroon," in three volumes. His (Tennyson's) new poem † is a "commonwealth of women;" a man gets in, and you may imagine the catastrophe. It is said

* It was produced by Mr. Macready during his years of London management.

† "The Princess."

to be very beautiful. The ode* was extorted—almost commanded—from Mr. Wordsworth, written in four hours, and printed against the will of the author. Did you, when here, know the new member for Reading, Mr. Pigott? I think you must. He is a young man of a very hearty, cordial, genial temper, a consistent Liberal, and came in after a fashion very rare and very creditable to all parties, without a paid canvasser, a paid clerk, or a paid attorney—without a threat or a bribe. Do you know Mr. William Wood, the new member for Oxford? He will be a great acquisition to the House and the party. Adieu, dear friend! say everything for me to Mr. Ouvry.

Three Mile Cross, Oct. 28, 1847.

Never for an instant, dearest Mrs. Ouvry, think of apologising to me for any delay in writing. In the first place, I am too bad a correspondent myself not to find a certain degree of comfort in being occasionally kept in countenance by so punctual and so delightful a letter-writer as yourself. In the next, I hold, as one of the most certain of all tenets, that no friends, and very few acquaintances, ever mean to affront or neglect one another; and that they who, to use the common word, are touchy on such points, do really commit as many mistakes and as much injustice as they take offences. I ought, rather, to apologise for this too rapid reply; but, in the first place (how often I fall into the shocking habit of

* Query—one of his Laureate's Odes?

repeating the same form of sentence), I wanted to lay in a stock of punctuality, upon which I might draw in case of future delays; in the next, I wished to tell you that I had sent your letter to Miss Edgeworth, through a mutual friend (one brought up in Miss Edgeworth's family, E—— J——, —did you ever hear the name?)—who is in constant habit of correspondence with that charming teller of stories, and will be delighted to give her old friend the pleasure which your letter will not fail to afford. I suspect that very few clergymen's wives are liberal enough and wise enough to avail themselves of Miss Edgeworth's wonderful knowledge of children's nature, and her power of interesting the attention. They *will* have books ostentatiously religious, although the actual good provided by them should be very inferior to that of one who, leaving religious doctrine untouched, gave all her attention to co-operating with their clerical instruction by softening the hearts and interesting the attention of the little pupils. There are few people nowadays so wise or so large-minded as you; and I have no doubt but the sale of these charming stories will be found to be not small.

Have you read Mr. Helps's "Friends in Council?" if not, do. Besides his usual excellence in essay, there is much raciness and character in the dialogue. I suspect that he has chosen "Ellesmere" as the vehicle of many pet boldnesses that he would not venture in his own person, but might safely dare in the dramatic form. "Monte Christo" is absurd enough; but we must not forget that one of the most perfect and most charming characters in fiction, the

Rigolette of "Les Mystères de Paris," belongs to Eugene Sue. I know nothing so fresh, so natural, or so life-like in any modern novel. I have just begun "The Bachelor of the Albany,"* and expect much amusement. Heaven bless you, dear friend!

Three Mile Cross, Dec. 16, 1847.

Your last kind letter, my dearest Mrs. Ouvry, set me a cogitating, and the result has been my silence. The fact is, that I had before had applications for exactly the same thing; that is, a list of secular books for the poor. Accordingly I talked of it to Mr. William Chambers of Edinburgh (one of the founders of the well-known Journal, who happened to come to see me), and he and I talked the matter over; and since I have been talking of it with my excellent friend, Mr. Lovejoy,† and the result is, that we are going to print such a list as soon as we have got it as complete as we can, the object being to combine excellence with cheerfulness; and then we will send you some copies to distribute. The real thing would be for five or six parishes to agree, and to interchange their books as soon as one set (say two hundred volumes) has been finished by one parish, and another by another, and so on; so that five libraries, of two hundred each, shall serve each for five parishes to read. But even without this beau ideal of coalition, much may be effected for

* By Mr. Savage.

† A bookseller at Reading, as remarkable for his intelligence as his benevolence.

twenty or thirty pounds; for we agree to have the very best books—no trash written for poor people —written down to them*—but the very best books, which are, luckily, the very cheapest. You know when Napoleon threw open the theatres to the public for a gratuitous play, he always chose Corneille or Molière, and always found that fine public appreciating the great thing put before it. William Chambers is a very clever person. He has just sent me a book, which he coaxed Miss Edgeworth into writing for him, called "Orlandino"—wonderful for her age; only at her age he ought not to have asked her to write. Heaven bless you, dear friend!

I have had a great misfortune; my dear old dog is dead.

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* Three Mile Cross, Dec. 20.

I have just sent off a packet from Miss Edgeworth to you, dearest Mrs. Ouvry, having been saved from the peril of opening a letter that puzzled me very much by the recollection that she and Miss J—— had both converted your name into Perry. I have sent it viâ Mr. Lovejoy's London packet, to Mr. Nicholls, in London. It consists of the little book called "Orlandino." I enclose the letter here. Do you care for Andersen's Fairy Stories, which are so much the fashion? Charles Boner (himself a very

* Compare this with the protest by Dickens shadowed forth in his "Bleak House," in the character of Mrs. Pardiggle, and the detail of her readings at the Brickmaker's.—C.

charming person) has just sent me his translation of the last volume of those Danish stories. Certainly, some of the previous ones, "Top and Ball," and the "Ugly Duck," are pretty; but, on the whole, I prefer human action and passion to a wilderness of fairy tales.

March 15, 1848.

You will think me a most helpless and useless friend, dearest Mrs. Ouvry, not to have written to you by the day you requested, but *you* wrote, apparently, on Saturday, when, probably, there is no post to London from Leighton-Buzzard; at all events, your letter reached me only this (Tuesday) morning, when I have no hope or chance of my answer's getting into your fair hands before Thursday. However, I write. My long silence has been caused partly by waiting for our catalogue (of which I have returned a proof three weeks ago), partly by my having been very unwell all the time—not quite confined, except for about a fortnight—but just crawling out for half an hour, and then returning so poorly that I was forced to go to bed; and this sort of illness tells ever upon my good spirits. I suppose it was influenza, not cold or cough, but a feverish loss of strength and appetite. I am rather better now, but I am expecting to-morrow a very clever lady to lodge close by, in order to be near me, and I confess that I dread the fatigue and excitement. She is a very clever, brilliant person, a little too brilliant to be perfectly natural and charming. She

has lived in France for the last twenty years, and knows intimately Arago and Lamartine (whose wife was an English woman, a Miss Birch), and Crémieux and Armand Marrast, which last, when Professor of History of a commercial school, used to act with her at her house, in plays written by herself. He is, she says, with M. Thiers, the smallest person in Europe. Of course she will be interesting now. I confess that I look with utter contempt on all Louis Philippe's people—the cowards! You will like "Jane Eyre." With all its coarseness and all its faults, there is vividness and originality, and a very piquant preference of a great sinner to a great saint —a most odious young missionary, whom the author lauds and bepraises, and takes and makes his readers hate—*that* is the very cleverest thing in the book. Well, of course you have ordered *that*. I am bad for remembering titles of books, or even books themselves, in a hurry—Lamartine's "Girondins," Dumas' "Life of Napoleon" (a very small book), and of Louis XIV., the two best things he ever did), Foster's "Life and Letters," "Gerald Griffin's Life," "Notes on Life" (I think I mean six Essays), by Henry Taylor, "Friends in Council," by your friend Mr. Helps. I will think of some more against I write again; and now, dearest friend, Heaven bless you!

No date, (about) March 1848.

At last, dearest Mrs. Ouvry, I send you our list.* Mr. Lovejoy smuggled in "Our Village," but, how-

* This list is lost—a list for parish school books.

ever, it will do you no harm, and you will pardon the apparent vanity. We have other lists forthcoming. In these days we must educate the *thoughts* of grown people. It is a necessity. Tell me if you approve or disapprove. I think this selection a little too didactic, and yet many of the dry-sounding books are very amusing. . . . . What times these are! and what is to become of Ireland? I am glad Thomas Davis is dead. I should not like to see him leading the movement.

P. S.—Do read Louis Blanc's "Histoire de Dix Ans."

May 1, 1848.

I have only a moment in which to write; I am poorly, and my dear little maid seriously ill, which is a deep anxiety; but you ask me for a list of Dumas' books, and I know what it is to want a clue to an amusing book, so I will not make you wait for it. . . . I hope to be in town next year, but all must depend upon my health. I could not stand the fatigue. Nevertheless I am in excellent spirits when I see those I love; and I enjoy books as much as ever. Everybody is very good to me, and I have many dear friends—you and Mr. Ouvry and (may I say?) Mr. Nicholls among them—so that I have much to be thankful for. Charles Lamb's new letters are very interesting. Mr. ——'s last bit of authorship is a very curious letter to the "Daily News." I love his dear wife, and have loved her for

twenty years; but he——Well, I've no room for anything but love to all at your dear home.

No date, (about) May 1848.

. . . . Is not Louis Blanc's a curious book? The total ignorance of the first principles of political economy is really remarkable in the countrymen of Turgot, and that seems to me all through the government. I am glad to find, however, that the moderate party are, for the present at least, prevailing; but the real danger is financial. When they are wholly at an end of their money, and the pressure of want of employment becomes urgent, then will be the danger. A friend of mine, who has just returned from France (posting from Paris to Boulogne) says, that as far as Abbeville it was like the suburbs of a city of the plague—villas deserted, shops shut up, and cottages without roofs or windows. He says that the Place de la Madeleine was half-covered with the paid *ouvriers* engaged in *roulette* or chuck-farthing. There are the dangers, the idleness and the false expectations and impossible hopes that have been held out to them. Thank Mr. Ouvry very much for his recommendation of Archbishop Whateley's book. The state of things in France shows the necessity of rendering these great books popular. We had been, before your letter arrived, busy with a classified catalogue. Everybody seems, more or less, to like our list. For my part, my wish is that it may be the cause of more able persons looking up the question. I send you more copies. *Apropos*

of Archbishop Whateley, my friend Mr. Horne has just published a Miracle Play, on his Grace's view of the character of Judas Iscariot. It has merit. The Archbishop's theory being eminently dramatic and poetical, and Mr. Horne's Play clear and reverent. I should be delighted to know your friend ——. Few things would give me more pleasure, especially if it led to seeing you again, my dear friend. But I am afraid that I shall be compelled to relinquish my contemplated trip to London this year. I am better, but am so exhausted by the slightest exertion or flurry, that I do not think I could stand the fatigue of town. Heaven bless you, &c.

Dec. 1848.

I lose no time, dear friend, in sending you the enclosed autographs, and answering your most kind inquiries. Your affectionate letter brought tears into my eyes. I do indeed wish that I had such a neighbour; but it is a comfort to have met a friend, even though a too long distance separates us. Since I wrote to you last I have been very ill, keeping my bed; but I am now better again. It is, however, the characteristic of my complaint that it is essentially fluctuating, better one day and worse another; and my little maid (an old servant, who left a better place to come back to me, and who is a most intelligent and affectionate person) observes that whenever I boast of being better, I am sure to fall back again; so that if ever she hears me what she calls "beginning to crow," she stops me with as deprecating a

look, as if I were about to say something naughty. Yes, Dr. Channing's Life reads like a long sermon; and I can't help thinking, with all my admiration for him, that he must have been too like a moral essay himself. To be sure, it may be the American inaptitude to biography. I don't know a single Life of their writing that is readable. Then one has read so much of the East—Warburton, Erskine, Clarke, Lord Lindsay, Lamartine, Chateaubriand, and a good dozen more. I do, however, heartily agree with you in deprecating the unchristian intolerance against Unitarianism. Did you ever read poor Blanco White's Life? and don't you admire Archbishop Whateley's conduct to him? He is a true Christian, whether he is an orthodox archbishop or not, of that I am sure. Talking of American books, do, the next time you are in London, look over Cooper's visit to England; it is the most unconscious development of a mind without a skin, that ever Yankee put forth. He lectures everybody of his country, and ours; and is, I am told, in perpetual hot water with all the journals in the States—at law with the greater part, and conducting his own suits. Adieu, dear friend; say every thing for me to your dear people.

Jan. 7, 1849.

It did my heart good, dearest Mrs. Ouvry, to hear of your happy Christmas meeting. Many and many a year may you enjoy such dear friends! only increased and gladdened by new and ever dearer ties!

Always I have felt that the union of a large and happy family must be about the most gladdening and delightful of human felicities. I was an only child, my mother an only child, my father with only one brother childless and far away, so that I am remarkably poor and always have been so, in those born friends, relations, and have always felt that it was a *want* in my life. But, then, to compensate for that deficiency, I have been very happy in friends—life-long friends, like William Harness, whose father gave my mother away—new and young friends like your own dear self, who come like the noonday sun in January to cast your own brightness upon sickness and age. God bless you all, dear kind friends! You cannot think how my heart warmed to you as I read your letter. You will be glad to hear that I have been a good deal better lately, so much better that I began to do too much, and have been for two days very ill again; but to-day I am wonderfully better, and hope to get on again. Two days ago I was beginning to plan a visit to Paris. Henry Chorley is going in March, and I have a very dear friend, a clever medical man, who, upon succeeding to the fortune of another younger brother, left his profession of an army surgeon, and who, in the course of a very perfect medical education, spent four years in Paris, so that with them, and my own very clever and capable maid, should be taken good care of. Mr. —— joined me at Taplow this summer, and spent what he is good enough to call the twenty happiest days of his life there in my company, so that we know one another's ways; for a clever and accomplished young man, it may show the sort of mind that

he is of—one like you, who finds pleasure in giving pleasure. I think my strong desire to go to France just now is to see with my own eyes a great piece of poetical justice—for such the placing one of the Emperor's family in the Palace of the Elysée seems to me. Has not the new President begun well? and does not that just review, with its touching incident of the strike, come in most favourable contrast to the tawdry, trumpery procession of the Provisional Government? I know two or three people who are very intimate with Prince Louis Napoleon, and they all speak of him as Mr. Kay Shuttleworth does. The one who knows him best said in a letter to me last week, "he is the very impersonation of calm and simple honesty." One can't make any predictions nowadays, especially of the French people, but those particular qualities seem well calculated to retain popularity, however they might have failed in gaining it; and as to the imputed madness and folly of his former enterprises, they are almost justified by the general feeling of France, which must have been latent then, and could hardly have failed to reach him through a thousand channels. I have been reading Lamartine's "Trois Mois en Pouvoir." His worst enemy could hardly have played him a worse trick than his own vanity has done in collecting all those speeches, so inflated and vague and coming to nothing; and there are choice bits of spite, such as calling Louis Napoleon "M. Charles Louis Bonaparte," which seem more like an angry woman than a poet or a statesman. I always *felt* that man's hollowness and vanity, and am glad that he has so justified my prejudices. Also I have been exceed-

ingly amused with "Jerome Paturot." Do read the whole of this new series (5 vols.), and also the old volumes, and Louis Reybaud's other very clever book "Le Coq du Clochér," which might pass for the story of an English election, so alike is human nature in both countries—I suppose in all countries. I was sure you would like "Le Gentilhomme Campagnard." Did you never read Charles de Bernard's great novel "Gerfaut?"—I think the very finest work of fiction in the French language—although hardly so irreproachable in its morality as "Le Gentilhomme Campagnard." Do read "Gerfaut;" read also "La Femme de Quarante Ans," a most delightful bit of high comedy, as "Gerfaut" is of the deepest pathos. I was most struck in "Mary Barton," with its fine constructive power, and the graceful use that it makes of Lancashire dialect; tell me if you hear who wrote it. I can't find out. Another book that has interested me much is Mr. Milnes's "Life of Keats." There is much rigmarole that would have been better omitted; but it rejoices one to find such true friendship as was shown to the great poet by the Dilkes and the Shelleys, and Mr. Brown, and Mr. Severn, and Sir James Clarke. Poor Blanco White!—it was a restless spirit, and a painful life!—painful to read of and to reflect upon. I'll read "Mildred Vernon." Adieu, dearest friend! say everything for me to Mr. Ouvry, and all of your dear people who remember me.

* * * *

Truly, Mr. Macaulay's is a very scientific book (I have begun but not finished it), a series of rich pictures, perhaps, rather than one great picture, but

still a work such as our English literature has not seen for many a day—think how poor we are lately in great authors!

1849.

It was quite a long time since we had heard from each other, my very dear friend—whose the fault was I cannot tell, but most likely mine, for I know myself to be an uncertain correspondent, although as constant as a turtle dove in the matter of liking those whom I have once liked. Moreover, for above a month, I was suffering under a terrible attack of neuralgia. . . . I caught it one long out-of-door day at White-Knights, where I met all the Goldsmids, and Mr. and Mrs. Cobden, we three being the only Christians. Do you know him? I was delighted with him, and, to say truth, a little surprised, having expected an older, rougher man; what astonished me was his simplicity and playfulness, his elegance and refinement. His wife, too, is sweetly pretty. Did I ever talk to you of my friend, Miss Goldsmid? She is a most splendid woman, in intellect I mean, quite queenly. I never knew much of the Jews before, and am most interested by them. Miss Goldsmid has given me a volume of sermons by one of their most eminent priests, which she has translated, and very finely translated, from the German. They are exceedingly interesting and beautiful, full of charity and brotherly love, reminding me of "Les Lettres Spirituelles" of Fenelon, and the works of

Channing and Arnold. Out of the Bible I never read a book by a Jew before, except "Josephus." I met our Bishop at a stone-laying. . . . It was a church to commemorate the late Mr. Holme, and his eldest daughter laid the stone; she disappeared for some time during the operation, and I wondered what she was at, and found afterwards that she had actually spread eight trowelfuls of mortar,—so does matter-of-factness peep out,—she could not be made to understand that the whole affair was make-believe, and that the less she did the less mischief she would do. I take for granted the workpeople had to lay the stone afresh. At the same time I met Mr. and Mrs. ——, she the handsomest woman there, in spite of her countless children. They were very kind, and seemed well and happy. Ah, poor Hungary! After all, I suppose it was no very free constitution; and the worst part of the matter, by far, is its bringing those barbarians the Russians into play again. Don't you like Louis Napoleon? He seems to me the very best king that Europe has known this many a day. What an idiot the Pope is! A friend of mine met George Sand at Paris above a year ago. They were talking of his Holiness—all the fashion then,—and she said just four words, the only words he heard her speak, "Il est trop prêtre," a remarkably characteristic expression, both as regards the subject and the speaker. Mrs. Browning is at the baths of Lucca, where Mr. Lever is the great *celebrité*,—she speaks of him as a most delightful person, which I can well believe. Lucca has been so cool that the thermometer in the sun has not been above 92°, often at 68°, and she is afraid they will not be able to stay the

vintage for the cold, which seems like a contradiction in terms. Her boy is a very fine, healthy child, and she is so well that she scrambles up the mountains and loses herself in the chestnut forests; she dreads returning to Florence she says, and the noise of the Austrian drums. It is a miserable, bookless life. I recommended to her "Portraits des Orateurs Français," not by any means a new book. (Do you know it? The author is "Timon," you know, by far the most brilliant writer since Paul Louis Courier), and she says that, except a little shop where there are about twenty French novels—the most recent "Le Gentilhomme Campagnard"—there is not a book French, English, or Italian, in the place, and that Florence is pretty nearly as bad, quite so as to recent works. They see a two-day old "Galignani," and think themselves in luck. I hope they'll come back here to books and friends and the "Times" newspaper. I have had quantities of books from America, by far the finest a superb thick octavo, bound in scarlet morocco, covered with gold, and ornamented with the author's portrait, by a Quaker. Another book is Longfellow's prose tales; not so good as his verse, I think, but, the Americans say, very true to their manners. You delight me by all your goings on—cricket and lectures. Better, I think, stick to Hallam, the subject is so large, that *one* authority is better than many. Have you seen a little volume of poems called "Ambervalia?" Mr. Clough is certainly a poet, although obscure, and clearly of the doubters who have sprung up numerously at Oxford, as was to be expected as a reaction after Puseyism,—with a thousand faults he is that great thing, a poet. Read

the book if it comes in your way. Say everything for me to Mr. Ouvry.

Taplow, close to Maidenhead Bridge,
Saturday night, 1849.

Your dear letter, dearest Mrs. Ouvry, found me at this pretty place, and added to my other pleasures, that of sympathy with the happiness of a dear friend, of *two* dear friends, for I think of Mr. Ouvry with more liking and more feeling of acquaintanceship than I should seem to have a right to do, if he were not your husband; but *that* fact authorises the interest, and he must accept and pardon *it*. I had been so poorly, and continued so weak, that Mr. May strongly advised change of air, not the sea, but some place within an easy distance, and tempting in its locality—so here we are, I and my little maid K——, my pony-chaise, and a careful old servant of other days as a volunteer driver. Nothing can be prettier than our whereabouts, a garden full of trees and flowers, with stairs to the river, the fine old bridge just below us, and gay parties in boats passing all day long. Then we have Windsor and Ockwells, and Burnham Beeches, and Dropmore, and Lady Place within easy drives, and Cliefden Spring within a walk, and I already feel a different creature. There was no disease, but a singular loss of power and of spirits, both of which, I bless God, seem coming back. People are very good and kind to me, and friends from Reading and the neighbourhood on the one hand, and from London on the other, are

so good as to come and see me almost every day. We are within five minutes' walk of the station, which is a great advantage, and really I could not be more comfortably placed. I only wish we could meet, dearest Mrs. Ouvry; but next spring, if it please God that this amendment hold, we shall, I trust, come together in London, and then I shall see the dear little girl, and love her for the sake of her dear mother. Mrs. Browning (Elizabeth Barrett) is at Florence. Would not Florence suit your friends? That city is quite quiet, absurdly cheap, owing to the panic that has sent the English away. Admirable apartments may be procured, and furnished to suit the English tastes and habits, without difficulty. Mrs. Browning says that her chief friends have been American artists and poets. Mr. Ware (author of those admirable Zenobia books, which read so like a translation from the Latin) is now there, a most interesting person. Mrs. Browning spent her first winter in Pisa, but speaks of it as very dull and dear, and hardly warranting the preference which Dr. Chambers gave to its climate over Florence,—that is to say, she thinks both equally good for pulmonary patients. Her only complaint is, that she cannot get new books either French or English. As to Lamartine, I never expected any good from him; and I heard the other day from Mr. Ruskin (the Oxford graduate) —to whom Mr. Rogers told the story—that, when in England, he, Mr. Rogers, asked him about Béranger, as "the greatest French poet," and M. de Lamartine replied—that doubtless Béranger would have been glad to know him (Lamartine), but that he (the aforesaid Lamartine) did not choose to have any-

thing to say to such a person. After this, commend me to the "poet statesman!" Even without this iniquity Thiers is worth a thousand of him. God send that Ireland be purified. I am really glad that poor Thomas Davis is taken away from such a scene. Heaven bless you, dear friend.

Undated.

No! dearest Mrs. Ouvry, I am afraid there is no chance of my being in town this Christmas, and yet I don't know, it will depend upon when a play,* by a dear friend of mine, is to be brought out at the Surrey—an odd place! but my friend, who lives much among very fine people, says that he rather likes the idea of a *Faubourg* audience (people not fine), —it is a very favourite friend, whose dramatic power I have always rated highly, for whom I have always predicted a dramatic success,—so I feel bound to go and see it. How I may stand the light and the heat I don't know, although much better than this time last year. I have not regained anything like my old powers of going into company, have not been at a lecture these two winters, and never mean if I can help it to go to a dinner party again. Except for this play, I should not go to town till the spring upon the chance of seeing Mrs. Browning then . . . at all events, if I be in London, the seeing you would be among my chief pleasures; and I should be sure to give you notice. I suppose you will stay a month or so. Just now we are under quarantine, having had a

* "Old Love and New Fortune," by the Editor.—C.

very heavy case of small-pox after vaccination in the house, and it has been so rife about (I have just counted up twenty-nine cases of my own knowledge, three of whom have died)—it has been so prevalent, and so serious, that we have been shunned as if we had the plague, and could not get a nurse for love or money. It was my man, gardener, coachman, etc., John, a steady good servant, who was ill, and my own dear little maid (an old servant who has left a much better place to return and live with me), having luckily had the disorder the natural way, has devoted herself to the sick man—she is a true sister of charity in all illnesses. The man is recovering, my own excellent maid is getting over the fatigue, but it has been a sensible anxiety. Now for "Shirley." I liked it very much, better than "Jane Eyre." It has not the melo-dramatic interest, and is all the better for the want of it; but to me it seems a racy poignant, pungent book—and with one admirable character, Shirley herself. None but a woman would have made so fine a portrait of a self-willed, spoilt, charming creature, who gives her heart to the only being whom she has ever learnt to fear and to look up to. No man of equal ability would have made love the be-all and end-all of life. It must be a woman. Besides, there is governess French in it, and a thousand small indications which you will find in reading; among others she gives the sort of social predominance to the clergy (writing of a manufacturing district among mill-owners and great squires) which women, who claim them as their own would do, and men would not. A friend of mine, who is more than any one behind the curtain in literary

society, says that it is by the daughter of a Yorkshire clergyman, and that seems likely. You are quite right about the want of objects for single women. In France, the rank just below the gentry is made at once happy and useful by keeping the shop books. In England even that resource is wanting, and that class is added to the idle and the wretched worsted-working young ladies. Among the other evils, too, the want of better occupation drives girls to write bad verse—the quantity of trash of that sort that I see would amuse you. But it is easier to point out the evil than to find the remedy. There is however a spirit of improvement abroad in the world, and I am hopeful. How are your Irish friends? I have just been reading Thomas Davis's admirable life of Curran, prefixed to his edition of those matchless speeches; and I am wanting to read all about the rebellion of '98. Can you give me a list of books?—a long list—I love to read down a subject. Did you know Mr. Lever in England? He and I have been exchanging tender messages through Mrs. Browning. I always liked his books, but hardly expected that he would like mine. What an excellent subject Mr. Stevenson chose for his lecture! I delight in topography, and am just now reading eight volumes of Border History—of Northumberland chiefly, our own country.

* * * * *

Don't you like the President, with his plans for the poor?

Christmas, 1849.

I thank you over and over again for your kind and charming letter. Our list is at present suspended because of business on the part of my excellent coadjutor, Mr. Lovejoy (for we only had Mr. Chambers for one evening), and of an unusual degree of employment on my side; but we mean to print it as soon as we are able, and you shall have the very earliest copies. Mr. Chambers said that the various intolerances of the clergy formed the greatest obstacle, both in England and Scotland, to a sound education. However, that will mend. Such people as Mr. Ouvry and yourself will arise, and the light will chase the darkness. Have you heard anything respecting Miss Martineau's health? I have a letter from Mrs. Browning, from Florence (they do not go to Rome till April), in which she says that she hears alarming reports respecting a return of illness, and that her friends are much alarmed. I have only heard this from Mrs. Browning, and hope that she is mistaken—it would be such a very sad thing. May I send to you, and to Mr. Ouvry, and to Mr. and Mrs. Nicholls anything so old-fashioned as the good wishes of the season?

March 1850.

I meant to have written to you at once, dearest Mrs. Ouvry, to tell you how very, very glad I am to hear of this new living. People will pay their rents and their tithes too, by-and-by, and then it will be a nice income, and the comfort of having your sister

so near in the parish . . . . and the school you have made must be very great indeed. The reason I did not write sooner is, that I have been waiting through this month of March, in which we have had dust enough to ransom all the kings upon the earth, for a wet day. The fact is, that I am so much better than during the last two or three years, that I am able to be out of doors four, five, or six hours a day, visiting, primrosing, calling upon neighbours, rich or poor, and yet not well enough to write after I come in again, being then just fit to rest and read, and be idle. So I waited for a wet day to write to twenty friends, and here has come a snowy one. But you will believe how sincere a part I take in your happiness, which seems to me to be more English and more real than that of almost any couple that I have ever known; for I feel that I do know Mr. Ouvry, although I have never seen him. Can you tell me if "The Sack of Baltimore," Thomas Davis's fine ballad, has ever been set to music? Why I ask is, that I have sent "Gille Machree" to Henry Phillips to sing, and shall send him some more of Gerald Griffin's exquisite songs, and probably that and the Emigration song by Thomas Davis; his magnificent recitation will do them justice. With "Gille Machree" I sent him a fine martial ballad, which a friend of mine (Mr. Hughes, of Donnington Priory—I dare say you know his daughter, who married Mr. Senior's son) picked up in a barrack-yard at Ehrenbreitstein, on the Rhine. It is a ballad about Prince Eugene, composed, words and music, by one of the Prince's old troopers, and the soldiers were singing it as they cleaned their muskets. Mr. Hughes has translated

it so characteristically that to read it makes one get up and walk about the room, as if there were a march playing. And, talking of poetry, my dear love, you must send me yours. I can trust you that it will be clear, pure thought, in clear, pure English; and besides, you are my friend; but when one gets all sorts of mystifications from people whose names one has never heard, it is quite impossible to care for them. You would like some poems by a certain Miss Julia Day, whom I have never seen; they are so pure, so graceful, and so harmonious. Take care, though, how you send the packet, for I have just escaped from a great post-office trouble. A dear friend of mine * sent me the first four chapters of a most vivid, striking book on "Chamois Hunting in the Mountains of Germany." Consulting me as a *confrère*—a brother sportsman—he posted it at Ratisbon, with a separate letter. The letter came *viâ* Paris; the packet (and no copy had been kept) wandered about during two months, and at last reached me through Hamburgh and Hull. I really believe our London Post-office picked it up, for they behaved like angels upon the occasion. I only hear that Miss Brontë is a woman of thirty, so diminutive as to be almost dwarfish,—has hardly ever left her father's parish in Yorkshire, and that Miss Martineau and she were mutually delighted.

* Mr. C. Boner.

No date, (about) June 1850.

I was so glad to see your little note, dearest Mrs. Ouvry. . . . For my own part, I do not read the "Times;" but I do read the "National," at present the more interesting paper of the two—full of bitterness against the English in the leading articles, and exhibiting such a brutal want of decency in the National Assembly as we English can with difficulty believe. My friend, Mr. Archer Clive, going with all the recommendation of a clever man of the world, and a man of twenty thousand a year, could not get in to hear the sovereigns of France give each other the lie—and no wonder. They said in the "National" the other day, that Alexander Dumas had put forth an *affiche* requesting the votes of the electors of the Seine, upon the ground of his having *recouvré* the immortality of the soul. One amongst them had denied it. What a state of things! We had here the other day, two days indeed, a most eloquent and interesting person, Dr. Mainzer,* and his sweet wife. He was for seven years one of the editors of the "National," has been lately in Scotland, working musical wonders, and is now going to

* A more striking instance of the willingness with which Miss Mitford took the people who chanced to please her at their own valuation could hardly be cited, than her sudden, unquestioning acceptance of Dr. Mainzer as a musical apostle—one treated and looked to as such by the celebrities, literary and political, of Paris. His method of popular instruction was singularly flimsy, and hollow, and barren of results, howsoever showy at first sight. It has now perished everywhere; while that of Bocquillon Wilhem, at the same time working in Paris to the same end—the method introduced, with adaptations, into England by Mr. Hullah, with unquestionable results—has stood the test of time, and the ebb of fashion.—C.

Paris, where he will find his old colleagues all in high office. With him came the Miss Goldsmids. Dr. Mainzer is the bosom-friend of Marrast, of Béranger, and of Lamennais, as well as of Lamartine and Louis Blanc. I take it that Lamartine, honest at the moment, has been, and has been felt, deficient in firmness and in moral courage equal to the extraordinary exigence of the time. We shall probably see some quite new name spring up, like Napoleon's, from the chaos, but, I fear, not without the melancholy intervention of war. For my own part, I have always felt, always seemed to hear, the flourish of trumpets even in the pauses of Lamartine's honied eloquence. When you were at Culverlands, did you ever visit Ufton Court? It is an old house, where Arabella Fermor, the heroine of the "Rape of the Lock," spent her married life, and where Pope and his contemporaries of fame and note often assembled; full, too, of hiding-places for priests, and other signs of an oppression now, thank God, passed away. I went there the other evening, but am still very nervous and poorly, and miserably afraid of my own pony and my own driver. Well, better days may come to us—to you, I trust, dearest friend, very soon, and very happily. The "Saint's Tragedy"* is a fine poem. I must read Mr. Mill's book.

1850.

I rejoice to see your handwriting once again, dearest Mrs. Ouvry. . . I only wish I were likel

* By the Rev. C. Kingsley.

to see you now at this time, when this grand show (which I plead guilty to caring little for) will at least bring friends together. I meant to be in town some time in May, but I have fallen lame, as they say of horses. There is no inflammation and no pain; and my little maid (she was not with me when we used to meet, but has lived with me, with that short interval, for fourteen years, and is a most attached and intelligent person) got frightened that it was dropsy that caused so great a swelling of the feet and ancles, especially as there was great loss of power in other ways. However, Mr. May says that it is not dropsical, but that this wet season has fallen most upon the limbs, and, together with the damp house, has caused the mischief, which fine weather and a healthier dwelling will do much to remove. So, as my Swallowfield Cottage is preparing, I shall get in there before the Autumn, and as Spring, I suppose, will come some time or other, I live in hopes; but I must get a little stronger upon my feet before visiting London, which is certainly no good place for lame people, especially as parading between twenty miles of counters is supposed to be one of the duties of the season. Mrs. Browning tells me that she and her spouse are coming here next month; but as they have to see Rome and Naples first before leaving Italy, I suppose they will hardly arrive before June. They intend to fix finally in Paris.

Mr. Kingsley's books are singularly inconclusive. There are great truths in "Alton Locke," and yet, as a whole, I know no work so unsatisfactory; and always excepting the author's own "Yeast," the title of which is, I suppose, to be accepted as a sort of

solution to the enigma, inasmuch as yeast has no merit except that of setting other substances working. The old Scotch bookseller in "Alton Locke" was very fine. "Yeast" has nothing like that; and as the papers so called were finished in "Fraser's Magazine" before the greater book was, I suppose, written, there may be hopes that he may work himself clearer by-and-by. What I especially dislike is his making both his humble-born heroes fall in love with young ladies. To be sure, he does not actually make them marry, but he shows that *he* (the author) has no objection. Now it has happened to me to see the final issue of two or three of these disproportioned marriages, and I have always found they result in great unhappiness to the inferior, that is, the promoted party. Mr. Kingsley is a sort of neighbour of mine, that is, he lives about twelve miles off, and I know many of his friends, but not himself. He is chaplain to the Journeymen Tailors' Association, which accounts for his technical knowledge. I have not seen "Nathalie;"* but I will.

1850.

You are amongst the rational, dearest Mrs. Ouvry, and I find the most sensible persons of your mind about the Exhibition—that it is much overrated. The natural consequence of this will be a reaction, and we shall live to hear the poor Crystal Palace decried as far below its merits, as it is now exalted above them. Our English people are much addicted

* By Miss Kavanagh.

to raising idols, and then revenging themselves on their own idolatry by knocking down and demolishing the poor bits of wood and stone that they had worshipped as gods. How many literary reputations have been so treated! my old friend and neighbour, Mr. Milman, for instance.—Who would believe now that in the days of Scott and Byron, when there were giants in the land, he was called by all young ladies, and by many besides, "the Poet!"—or, that Mrs. Siddons met him at the Louvre, and recited his prize poem on the Apollo Belvedere, at the foot of the statue? I have not seen the Exhibition myself, and perhaps may not. For the last four months I have been so miserably lame that I can hardly get across the room, and am rather lifted than helped into a sort of little pony-chaise for an evening drive. This is a sad trial. But as it is thought to be the effect of a damp house and wet season, there is hope in summer weather, and in the new and perfectly dry cottage into which I hope to get before Michaelmas. At present I abstain from London—partly from fear of the fatigue, partly in the hope that Mrs. Browning may be in England by the end of the month, and that I may meet her there; at all events as other dear friends will then come from the north, and the place will be less full, and my feet may be stronger, so I take the chance, quite resigned to the probability of not going at all. I miss my daily walks far more. Have you seen Mrs. Browning's new poem.* It will hardly be popular, for there is no great faith in Italian patriots. She was at Venice when I heard from her last, so well that she was to be found every

* "Casa Guidi Windows."

evening at half-past eight in St. Mark's Place, drinking coffee and reading the French papers, from whence they adjourned to the opera, where they had a box upon the best tier for 2*s.* 8*d.* English. I read "Yeast" as it came out some years ago in "Fraser;" it has Mr. Kingsley's usual power. I hope to know him when I move, for he visits many of my friends. I know nothing that has pleased me so much for a long while as Lord Carlisle's two lectures. They have about them the personal charm that I suppose belongs to the man himself. I should like to hear Cardinal Wiseman, without any tendency to being converted.

February 8th, 1851.

This damp weather, and a sensibly damp house, have done me much harm; for the last six weeks I have hardly left my room. . . . . However, I live in hopes that finer weather, and the Spring which is coming, may set me right again. Oh, yes! Hood was a noble poet—four of his things, "The Bridge of Sighs," "The Haunted House," "Eugene Aram's Dream," "The Song of the Shirt," are magnificent. Is it possible that you did not know them? But these are all; and the quantity of trash called comic, which he was forced into writing for a livelihood, smothered the finer productions. No man, especially a poet, should write against the vein. I am just now deeply interested by a new American poet, Oliver Holmes, —Dr. Holmes, for he is an eminent physician of Bolton, whose "Astrea" seems to me the most polished

and beautiful poem that I have seen for many years. It has the tenderness, and sweetness, and finish of Goldsmith, with far more originality and strength. I am expecting two more works of his every hour. I doubt if they will be reprinted here. They are not of the new-fangled sort, although most striking from their richness and graphic power. I shall make copious extracts from them in my book that is to be. "Alton Locke" is well worth reading. There are in it world-wide truths very nicely put, but then it is painful and inconclusive. Did I tell you (perhaps I did) that the author begged Mr. Chapman to keep the secret? and Chapman was prepared to be as mysterious as Churchill on the "Vestiges" question; when he found Mr. Kingsley himself had told everybody, and that all his fibs were falsehoods thrown away.

* * * * *

P. S.—Did you never read the real autobiography, called the "Life of a Radical?"* It is very interesting. I have known many persons of that class, but they were generally poetical aspirants, and therefore discontented, repining, and unhappy. When they limited themselves to self cultivation, they reaped the good without the evil, and of that class too I know a few, and respect them infinitely. How I should like a long talk with you over these things and others!

P. S. 2nd.—Ah, my well-beloved President! I knew you would come round to him!—he is much

* By Samuel Bamford.

too good for his nation, and, as you say, has little in common with it: too honest, too calm, too modest, too truthful! One heartily hates the Assembly. But how little there is to like even in our own public men. I think my own especial favourite is Mr. Roebuck, but then I like his position—poor and powerful; and I like his peculiarities, which make one always recognise a speech of his—as of Hotspur, whether one begins with the name or not. Then, as a writer, don't you like the Cardinal?* Was not his speech capital? so are his lectures on the Hierarchy: have you seen them? He is only forty-nine, and the delivery not equal to the matter—a weak voice, disappointing as coming from a large man.

Swallowfield, Reading, (about) August 1851.

You will see by the date that I have moved into my new cottage: it is about six miles from Reading, on the Basingstoke Road—my own old road, with a little lane leading up to it, for it stands upon a small eminence, framed in as it were between tall trees. The drives and walks behind are beautiful,—deep woody lanes, pastoral water meadows, and the clear, brimming Loddon winding through a gentle valley, mixed with scraps of woodland like the remains of some great primeval forest,—I should like to show it you. At present I am busier than words can tell. I left a friend in town to sell a book in two vols., and he sold three, so that I have one-third now to write in the midst of this moving. The man who moved

* Cardinal Wiseman.

our goods says that there are above four tons of books, and you may imagine what that will be to arrange. To return to my own work, it is to be called "Recollections of Books," and consists partly of extracts, but there is so much of introduction that it will be almost an autobiography. I hope you will like it. Oddly enough, that when your letter came I had just received from America a republication of Mr. Hawthorne's earliest books, "Twice told Tales," with a new preface very characteristic, and an equally characteristic portrait. He is certainly a very striking and original writer, and the "Phœbe" of the "House of the Seven Gables," is almost equal to Rigolette. I was a week in London, close to Mrs. Browning, who is walking about like other people, with a pretty little boy, to whom it is odd to hear the English father, English mother, and English nurse talk Italian.

February 20th, 1852.

Since writing to your husband, dearest Mrs. Ouvry, I have heard several additional accounts of the college at Broadfield, all exactly the same tendency with that which I sent you. Mr. Stevens, clergyman and chief proprietor of the parish, is a Tractarian of the most extreme class. He has two brothers-in-law of the same opinions, and they all (Mr. Stevens especially) joining a great love of music with these theological tendencies, it is a sort of mixture of church music and church discipline. A friend of mine in the neighbourhood, whose sporting propensities lead him

frequently past the place, says that the chapel bell is tinkling at all hours, from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m.; in fact, that he never went near the place without hearing it. Mr. Binfield, the Reading music master, has a son there, and although they are doing what they can to raise the caste of the institution, it is at present chiefly composed of charity boys and tradesmen's sons. I have taken pains with this enquiry, being most desirous not to mislead you, and my present account comes from half a score of persons very different from each other, but all acquiescing in their report of this school.

My book, I hear, is very popular,* and Mr. Bentley presses me by every means, direct and indirect, to write another; so that, of course, it sells largely. Every day brings me upwards of nine letters about it, and books past count; and last week two sets of climbing roses, from two different nurseries in Hertfordshire—two of them new seedlings, called the "Miss Mitford" and the "Swallowfield;" so I have cause to be content. I hope you will like it; but you must allow for more misprints than ever were made. It was driven though the press three volumes at once, the printer sending me the proofs without previous reading, and very often not attending to my corrections. Amongst other evidences of popularity, a French professor, lecturing on English poetry in Paris, is making it a sort of text-book. But, my dear friend, when one gets to my age, one is not so satisfied with oneself or one's own doings. . . . Ah! the President! Henry Chorley says that I am like an old war-horse, that says "Ha, ha!

* The "Recollections."—C.

to the sound of the trumpets," and that the very name of Napoleon is enough for me; but I confess that I always fancied Louis Napoleon, and that I have a very considerable faith in him still—all the greater because of the abuse of English newspapers. How I enjoyed the flooring the press got in both Houses, especially when good old Joseph Hume put the coping-stone on the debate by hoping that Louis Napoleon, as a man of sense, would remember that journalism was a trade, like any other trade. I hate what D'Israeli calls "a cry." All that Protestant bigotry last year was enough—not quite enough (I like freedom of thought too well), but almost enough—to make one turn Catholic, which, by-the-way, I can understand to act better than the Catholicism in black and white called Tractarianism, which seems to me to adopt all the faults and follies and slaveries of the old faith without its beauty, its colour, its associations, or its poetry.

I had a letter from Paris only to-day, from a young ball-going lady, who says that that gay capital was never so joyous, and that the popularity of the Prince President with the people and the shop-keepers is as great as popularity can be. For the rest, one astonishing thing is that Louis Napoleon is the only man who has made any reputation in these four years of opportunity. Several great names have disappeared, but his is the only one that has risen. I am afraid that I don't care much for Guizot; he always seemed to me too much of a Sir Charles Grandison, preaching about religion and morality, and lending to all the tricks and plots, ignoble enough, of his master. There is a sort of grave, solemn coxcomb whom I

can't abide, and he is one of them; but I have no respect for any of those French statesmen. I have become acquainted with Mr. Kingsley lately, and, though too far off for much winter intercourse (nine miles), I hope to see him often in the summer. I don't like his opinions, of course; but the man is charming—that beau ideal of a young poet, whom I never thought to see—frank, ardent, spirited, soft, gentle, high-bred above all. Your question about the strike put me in mind of him; for Mr. Thomas Hughes to be figuring as the champion of the workmen is said by my two friends, his father and his grandfather, to be led astray by Mr. Kingsley. Certainly he could "wile the bird from the tree." I suppose there are faults on both sides, but the strikers seemed to me to have the best of it. Did you know Mr. Starkey in Ireland? Digby Starkey, a friend of Miss Edgeworth and of poor Thomas Davis? I had a charming letter from him a day or two ago. Poor Mr. Warburton! I hear much of him from my friend, a neighbour of the Russells, whose eldest son, a youth of the highest promise, was the "R" of the "Crescent and the Cross." He is since dead. They speak of Mr. Warburton in the very highest terms. . . .

P. S., Friday.—I send the letter in its entireness. Send it back, please, when read, because I want to show it to a friend whom I am expecting next week. I have another letter to-day from the same correspondent. She has seen George Sand, and is charmed with her. As short as I—I thought her taller—stout, with pale olive complexion, dark hair,

nicely parted and gathered in a bunch behind, dark, glowing eyes, low voice, very quiet, simple manners, restrained rather than ardent, graceful, noble, kind, altogether a very charming person, most simply dressed,—in one room with a bed in it. My friend could not help stooping to kiss her hand, upon which she flung her arms round her neck, and kissed her on the lips. She (Madame Sand) had come to Paris chiefly to solicit the President for a friend of hers. He received her most kindly, shook hands with her, and granted her request. One newspaper said she was exiled by him. They talk, too, of the censure upon books. On newspapers it does exist—on books not. I have had to-day a book sent me in sheets, without title-page or preface. It is a poem called "Verdicts," a poem on poets, very bold and very clever. I have no means of guessing at the author. If you hear anything about him tell me. Heaven bless you, dear friend! Say everything for me to your dear husband, my other correspondent.

March 23rd, 1852.

I write to you at once, dearest Mrs. Ouvry, because I have, especially just now, so many correspondents that my letter might, if left to a proper time, be delayed long beyond it; and I think you wish to hear. First, tell Mr. Ouvry, with my love, that if I went to anybody in the world it should be to you and him; but I never stay anywhere. It is one of the laws of the Medes and Persians. But we *shall* meet, I feel it, and I know it. Now for Madame Sand. A worse

life than she has led cannot be. She was married, a girl, to an old officer of the Empire—an ardent, passionate girl of genius, to a stiff martinet. There is her excuse. She went up to Paris in man's clothes, with Jules Sandeau, also a French novelist,—remarkable (which is odd) for purity and delicacy. They lived together very poor, very loving, writing upon the two ends of one table for bread. (You will find an account of this *ménage*, without the confession that it is her own, in one of her books of travels, either that on Italy or that on the South of France; and a most charming account of his first appearance as "un jeune homme charmant," at Paris, is also extant in Jules Janin's delightful work, "Les Catacombes.") Then she left Jules Sandeau for another, and another, and another, chiefly "artistes," authors, or musicians; and what is worse, the books she published then are as bad as her life was; and what is worse still, the most odious of her books, "Valentine," is the most characteristic and the most beautiful. Well, before the revolution of February, she had a good deal improved in her books. Indeed, in most of her later works there is little to blame except the Socialist taint; and she had begun to be one of the lions of the Faubourg St. Germain when the revolution broke out, and her violent politics severed her from her noble allies. She wrote a great many of Ledru Rollin's worst circulars, and was getting into her old disrepute when she took to writing dramas, and conquered a new kingdom. Do read "Claudie." I read it in London last year, and was forced to put on a bonnet, and let a veil down to hide my face, I had cried so. For the rest, she must

now, I think, be border
she hopes she has conque
Indeed, I hear that for ab
lived without any lover at
Berry (her most charming
the Berrichon patois about
youth devoted to her, and
her plays before they are b
You know her "Mare au Dia
think her so great as Balzac; b
relish Balzac, you must read him
books have a connection. But it is
and in one great series, that of "Les
dues," such passion and such force; on
scoffer. One feels the scoff when one does not
and Madame Sand is saved from that blight by
natural tenderness of woman. Have you read my book,
madam, and known me now some half-dozen years,
and do you ask me if I love reading? Why, it is
that in which I live. Very few women, I believe,
have read so much; and it is one of the many blessings for which I have to thank God, that the taste, the relish is as keen and as eager as ever. I am sure that a disappointment in authorship kills the literary appetite altogether, which is one reason why I never persuade young ladies to publish. . . . .

By-the-way, have I spoken to you of some poems that go under the name of Mary Maynard? "The Sisters of St. Mary," and "The Longest Day," are very fine indeed. She (for it is a she) is one of the thousand and one new correspondents given me by that book of mine. You would be astonished at the number of letters and books which have come and

as one can do to answer
Rome, received to-day, my
ere are some curious traits
) Italy. He left Florence
good tobacco." Ah! I am
President. Timon (M. de
ser of the Orleans confisca-
be very rich. My admira-
poleon did not spring from his
or, but a great restorer, a great
eat man. Béranger calls him the
modern days; and moreover, in four
red volumes of Memoirs about him that
e I found all, from the prince to the valet,
ng in loving him for his *bonhommie* and kind-
s. Adieu, dear friend!

April 7th, 1852.

So entirely do I join with you in condemning Madame Sand, that I point blank refused Mrs. Browning to send her my books with hers some years ago. Those years have a good deal altered the face of things; she has reformed her bad ways, lives quietly with her children, and, above all, has given up the demoralizing book writing, which was far more mischievous than her personal immorality, and puts her genius (for it is more than talent) to its proper use. Her later stories, and, above all, her rustic dramas, give token of a greatly altered moral sense. In short, she is now a person whom I should not object to meet, although I should not go in search of her,

and should most assuredly never dream of any hand-kissing. Béranger and the Prince President are the only two personages in France whose hands I have any fancy to shake. But Mrs. Browning did make an idol of talent. The thing that astounds me is that that propensity should not have vanished after seeing the clay feet, as she must have done in so many cases. Very rarely is it indeed that the man keeps the promise of the author. So you see we do not disagree here, although French morality is different from English, was so especially under the Bourbons of either branch—Napoleon being the only man who tried to establish respect for the ties of family. I hope Louis Napoleon will follow his example. In another matter I am heartily of your opinion; the very small merit that belongs to writing pretty verse. I always am so to every body, especially to every young lady cried up as a prodigy. It is an accomplishment of easier acquirement than good pianoforte playing, and well nigh as common.

* * * * *

I like Louis Napoleon's speech much—don't you? and his financial operations, and above all, his law to put down wine-shops, as far as they can, by double taxation. I met with a passage quite to the same effect the other day, in Milton's prose works. Oh! I have just had a curious present; the actual cane of the Speaker Lenthall, handed down as an heir-loom. It is a fine old cane with a head of enamelled copper, and a wide gold rim. Did I tell you they are engraving a miniature of me, taken when I was between three and four years old? I gave it to a friend who took a fancy to it, never dreaming of

such a catastrophe, and now at this moment am waiting for Mr. Lucas to take an old woman's portrait, which Mr. Bentley wants;—a terrible operation, even although it be our great portrait painter, the most delightful person in the world, who performs it. I am lamer than ever, fifty times lamer, or I ought to have gone up to John Lucas, instead of bringing him here, so I fear there will be no May visit to London; I could neither manage stairs nor carriages without my own man.

My friend, Mr. Bennett, who besides being a charming poet, is an eminent watch-maker and jeweller, gave me the other day a most curious account of the forger of the "Shelley Letters."* A young man quite sufficiently like Lord Byron to vindicate his claim to illegitimacy, called on him a year or two ago, to bespeak a locket for three curls of his father's hair, cut off at three different periods of his life (I dare say they were hair forgeries, cuttings from wigs). He called himself Mr. Byron; and coming often to see about the locket, one day asked Mr. Bennett to accompany him home to examine certain papers and engravings which he had been collecting for the purpose of a great life of his father, which he had in contemplation. Mr. Bennett says there was an enormous chest, full of books, MSS., drawings, prints, portraits of all Lord Byron's friends, and views, not only of all his houses, but even of the Italian towns where he had lived; above all, there were huge bundles of letters, in every sort of handwriting, with every variety of post-mark, and in every kind of preservation—some looking comparatively fresh and

* An Imitation of Shelley's Letters, edited by Mr. Browning.

clean, others tattered and torn. No doubt from amongst these were taken the Shelley forgeries, and there doubtless were the germs of many others. They would, Mr. Bennett says, have deceived the whole world, as indeed they did deceive not only Robert Browning, but practised publishers like Mr. Moxon and Mr. Murray—autograph collectors and autograph auctioneers. There was also a most elegant young woman, to whom Mr. Bennett was introduced, called Mrs. Byron, although it is now said not his wife; she was educated, it is said, at a finishing school at Blackheath, and is, no doubt, the negotiatrix of the letters. The characteristic end of this story is, that having run up a bill from thirty to forty pounds he disappeared without paying it.

July 9th, 1852.

Ah, my dear friend! do not lecture me for loving and admiring! It is the last green branch on the old tree, the lingering touch of life and youth. I will tell you a story I heard of Louis Napoleon the other day. Miss S—— (you are not unlikely to know her, a sister of Professor S——) had a friend, a lady of rank, who found herself placed next the Prince President at some great fête. He was very courteous, but silent, and she wished to hear him talk; so she recollected having received much kindness from his mother on some occasion in Switzerland, and spoke of it with warm gratitude. He turned to her immediately. "Ah, madame, vous avez connu ma mère!" and immediately began talk-

ing of Aremburg, the place and the people—as a school-boy talks of home. The lady spent some months in Paris, receiving from Louis Napoleon every kindness and distinction which his position enabled him to offer; and when she thanked him for these marks of attention, he stopped her always with "Ah, madame, vous avez connu ma mère!" But he never forgets a benefit, and returns the mere civilities of his less happy years by every sort of kindness. Is this common in every body? especially in royal people?

Well! I had rather be pitied for warmth than admired for coolness—and amongst those whose good opinions are best worth having, I have no lack of fellow enthusiasts. Dear Mr. Fields—by very far the most charming American that I have seen—spent two months in Paris in the autumn and the spring, saw much of the Prince with the American Minister at Paris, and is enchanted with him.—Old Lady Stanley of Alderley, Gibbon's friend and correspondent (sixty years ago), by very far the most wonderful woman I ever knew, in mind and body, is quite as warm as I am, and dear Mrs. Browning is even more so. The last parting between the Prince and Madame Sand was as follows: "Vous verrez—vous serez contente de moi." "Et vous, vous serez contente de moi." Now this is treating a great woman as power to power.

I ought to get to town next month to see dear Mrs. Browning, and the Ruskins, who come home from Venice about that time; but I doubt if I shall be able. Ever since January I have been such a sufferer from rheumatism in the knees and ancles,

that I am lifted in and out of my low pony carriage, and step by step up stairs to bed; and I have no notion that I could encounter the flags and door-steps and staircases of London. They say that warm weather will do much for me, but I doubt our having any. This terrible helplessness, for I can hardly cross the room or get up from my chair, has prevented my doing anything; and, indeed, I have had from ten to twenty letters to answer and books to acknowledge every day — my book having been reprinted in Paris and other places, and often in America, and the letters about it really being overwhelming—from America especially.

Hawthorne's book now printing, is, I am told, even finer than the "Scarlet Letter" . . . .

Adieu, dear Mrs. Ouvry. I dare say it will be a long time before I write again, and therefore I wrote at once, because if I get better I have much to do.

Kindest regards to Mr. Ouvry. Have you seen a print of me in "Bentley's Miscellany?" it is thought very like.

October 13th, 1852.

Ah! dearest Mrs. Ouvry, you can't read my hand. It was not anecdotes of Macaulay (thank you though for your pleasant one) that I wanted, but an autograph, if such a thing were forthcoming, for Mr. Dillon's book. Village schools are excellent things. My good young neighbour, Sir Charles Russell, is setting up some here, aided by our excellent curate,

and I am fighting a very admirable person, whom no doubt you know (Mr. Crabbe Robinson), to let me have 200*l.* left to my administration by a deceased friend to help them and a lending library. He is executor, and wants me to give it to a Lady's College! as if there were not too many governesses! and as if this humble, useful institution were not worth a hundred flashy affairs of that nature! I know that you and Mr. Ouvry will agree with me in this. I cling to my Prince, where you will not agree. If we have a war, it will be the fault of our hateful press. Good-bye, dear friends.

No date, (about) January 1853.

Oh! dearest Mrs. Ouvry—I have a very bad bulletin to send to you. Last Monday fortnight I was thrown violently from my own pony-chaise upon the high road in Lady Russell's park, Heaven's blessing be upon you and yours! Tell Mr. Ouvry, with my love, that two days ago I had a charming letter from John Ruskin, and that his father (with whom I am also in correspondence) tells me that the "Stones of Venice" will be completed in March, and that this volume will contain even finer passages than the last. A most conscientious book it will certainly be, for the author has spent above a twelve-month in measuring and sketching upon the spot. No, don't read "The Blithedale Romance"—it is unworthy of its author. He was busy with another, but it will probably be interrupted; for I hear by letters received this very day from America, that he

is in daily communication with the new President, of whom he was formerly the class fellow at College, and has been lately his neighbour in the little town of Concord (where Emerson also lives), and that it is all but certain that Hawthorne will be called to high office. Four years ago he was literally starving! This will be the best thing possible for his books, of which the fault with all their beauty is unreality—the want of that common breath of every day life which is so essential to literature, and which all our great poets, from Homer to Scott, have possessed—Shakespeare the greatest poet of all. My letters say, that no Englishman can conceive the scramble for place, and the dirty intrigues that take place every four years in the model Republic—we know something of that by the squabbling of the last Sessions in our Parliament. I have always heard that D'Israeli was of Jewish descent. Apropos of the Jews, Miss Goldsmid writes me word that they are sure now of being admitted to Parliament. Many circumstances have concurred, the Duke's death, the new ministry, &c. This has quite revived her father, Sir Isaac, the real author of the movement.—I did not like "Esmond;" besides the odious love story, I thought it long and tedious, and I demur to the criticism, holding, with Hazlitt, that Steele was worth twenty Addisons. Mr. Bentley is pressing me for a second series of my last book. If I be well enough, I suppose I must do it. In that case I shall give some [redacted]pters to French literature. Can you help me to [redacted]the exquisite ballads of Casimir Delavigne [redacted]luded in his poesies?—there are many. I have [redacted], but I want all, especially one of which the

refrain is "Chez l'Ambassadeur de France." Also I shall give a chapter to that matchless fairy tale, the story of the Emperor, to whom I am as constant as a turtle-dove—I shall bring him in as an author. Be very sure that to write abominable falsehoods about him is not the way to keep the French army quiet.

No date, (about) Jan., Feb., or March, 1853.

I write hastily, dearest Mrs. Ouvry, having very many kind letters to answer, to satisfy your very kind inquiries as to my present state. There is no danger; but there is little progress. I am still unable to put one foot before the other—to stand, or even to move in bed—so that being lifted in, there I lie like a log; and so tedious are these bruises of the nerves, that Mr. May gives me little hope of any real change till the warmer weather sets in, and even condemns me to keep my room till then, lest I should add rheumatism to my present incapacity. Somewhere about the end of April, he thinks, I may be got downstairs and into a garden-chair, and then there will be a chance of considerable amendment; and with this I must be not only satisfied, but thankful. A friend of mine having been three years ago confined during eight months from the same sort of accident, and a neighbour lying just now in danger of lockjaw, from the bruise of nerves of the spine in a fall from his h[illegible] Friday. To-day brought me *one* of the much ballads—the most charming thing that I kn[illegible]

French poetry—and the promise of another—not the "Chez l'Ambassadeur de France;"—no doubt I shall gradually get them all. In three separate editions of my acquaintance, all called "Œuvres Complêtes de Casimir Delavigne"—Poesies—there are two or three of these delicious poems—never the same! The author appears to have repudiated them all except one, which is admitted in a note, and there are different posthumous editions collected by various editors; they are worth all the "Messeniennes" a thousand times over, and the "Théâtre" too, although one or two of the comedies are charming. Even you must confess that this marriage* is a fine thing—the finest homage ever paid to Woman and to Love; and the speech is worthy of it from the appeals to natural feelings, and the bold casting aside of worn out conventionalities. Think how fine a thing to substitute respect and affection and honest preference to the horrible intermarriages which entail upon the innocent posterity scrofula and epilepsy, madness and idiotism! God grant that the example be followed. No, I have never seen Lord Jeffrey; but I have heard him described, as you describe him. Moore I knew well. What a pity that, in either case, the editors should publish letters, which one is sure the authors would not have exposed to the public eye. A curious thing I heard the other day from a friend of Mr. Croker in Ireland, that he (Croker) was reading Moore's charming letters with the greatest interest and delight. any of think (unless Lord John follow the too not incu Whig policy, and use his foes better than his some

* Of the Emperor Louis Napoleon.

friends) that by-and-by the Irish Tory critic will meet with something that he will not be so much delighted with. Adieu, dear friend.

In the preface to "Atherton," you will find the story of my writing that book. The exertion almost killed me. I have no faith in women's colleges or woman's rights. We have our own duties in our own sphere. Poor Haydon! that fascinating book does not do him justice.*

No date, (about) May 1853.

I can well believe the shocking story you tell me: nothing is too barbarous for the Austrians in Italy. I have three or four friends in different cities there, who all write in the same tone. Mrs. Browning says, "I see daily a people who have the very life crushed out of them, and yet of their oppressions the English press says nothing." Did you remark one paragraph in a letter of the Austrian correspondent of the "Times?" It was just before the execution of the Hungarian who attempted the life of the Emperor. The correspondent said, "Nothing has been extorted of him as to his accomplices, although he has twice undergone corporal punishment, and been awakened every hour!"—Now this was torture; and not one word of remark was made by the liberty-lovers who attack Louis Napoleon for his despotism.

A charming thing was sent to me in MS. lately,

* "The Biography and Letters of Haydon." Edited by Mr Tom Taylor.—C.

called the "Heart of Montrose," in three volumes. Do you know the strange history of that wandering heart? It was new to me. I have read more French than English lately, and more old books than new. Amongst the most interesting is a book by Béranger, the famous avocat,—specimens of French eloquence, two thick 4tos. A pretty work was sent to me a day or two ago called "The Peak and the Plain." Adieu, dear friend.

August 1, 1854.

Two or three kind and attached persons have offered to come and stay with me; I refused their offers as adding a weight of trouble to the faithful servants who are my real and most affectionate nurses; but when such letters as yours come, I feel the want of them. I think I must refer you to the preface to "Atherton," which contains a faithful though very modified account of my state four or five months ago. Ever since that time I have been growing weaker and weaker, and upon a friend arriving about five weeks ago to see me, from Germany (he was coming next year, but came *this* that he might see me), his talk (and he only stayed two hours) so much excited and fatigued me that, on being lifted into bed again, I had such a struggle for breath that my attendants thought me dying; it was mere exhaustion, but so painful and so dangerous, that I have not ventured to be put to bed since, but sit upon a great chair with my feet upon a leg rest. I take nourishment every two or three hours, and

as much champagne and water (at the rate of a table spoonful to a dose) as I can be got to take, and that, dear friend, is my condition. But God is very merciful. It has pleased Him to spare my intellect and my affections. I am wheeled to the open window, and although not high enough to look out, I can still feel the breath of the sweet summer air, and look at the blue sky and green trees. I have a jar of roses inside the window-sill, and outside a great sheaf of fresh gathered meadow-sweet. Everybody is kind to me, and I still take pleasure in literature, I hope, too, that it is a deeper and tenderer feeling than vanity which has has made the universally cordial reception of "Atherton," a high gratification to me. I believe it is the only work of fiction which has told well this war year (three months published, they tell me it will soon be in a third edition); and in America I hear, to use the publisher's own words, that "the newspapers and periodicals are outvying each other in words of praise, and that no book for many years has been hailed with such an outbreak of applause." Last week my dramatic works (finished last autumn) were also published, and to them also the press seems most kind. . . . Say everything for me to Sir George, and all of your dear people whom I know, especially Mr. Ouvry.

September 25th, 1854.

Ah, my dear friend, you know little of my state! For three months I have been given over—for nearly the same time I have been unable to bear the

exertion of being lifted into bed. It brought on exhaustion, and that caused a frightful and dangerous struggle for breath. So I sit here, day and night, on a water cushion and an easy chair, sometimes propped by air pillows, sometimes with my feet on another chair. Judge if I can move! But I have been so kindly watched by a man of the highest medical talent (Mr. May, of Reading); in spite of being six miles off, and of his bad opinion of my case, would not abandon the stranded ship, but has continued to try all the resources of his great art, as if his own fame and fortune depended on it, that I have experienced a considerable revival during the last three weeks. All along I have retained such mental faculties as have been vouchsafed to me—my sympathies and my affections, my love of nature and of literature—even my interest in little things, and my old cheerfulness. These are great alleviations, so have been the warm kindness of friends and neighbours;—the sympathy of almost all the eminent persons in literature, especially the authoresses, the success of my two books, and the cordial interest shown by strangers.—God has been very merciful. Let me add that I am fully convinced that this visitation has been sent in mercy to draw me to Him. May His grace be with me that I do not cast aside the opportunity. Do not misunderstand me, I was always a firm believer in the great redemption: but I used to worry myself about reconciling this and that. Now I have nearly gone through the gospels for the third time in two months, yielding myself implicitly to that Divine history as it is written there —the best way surely for an unlearned woman, I do

not venture to say the only one. I have found the greatest comfort in a most dear friend, Hugh Pearson, of Sonning. Did you ever hear of him? For the last few weeks he has been travelling with Arthur Stanley. He is expected home every day. When he went I never thought to meet him again on earth, neither did he. He is of all the men I have ever known the nearest to perfection in heart and mind, the chosen friend of great authors, although no author himself—but the complete, finished, accomplished man of letters, full of exquisite taste, devoting himself to his parish and to everybody, except that of taking care of his own health. When I say that I have lost no affection, I mean to say that I dearly love you, and dearly, most dearly do I love John Ruskin; he and his excellent father and mother have been, perhaps, the very kindest of my friends through this illness. There is nothing too great or too small for their unfailing attention. He sent me such photographs as none but himself ever took from Rouen. He cannot read an interesting French book without sending me a copy. Champagne, which at one time supported me, they sent by dozens, and doubtless would send Cognac brandy if they knew that that and grouse soup and turtle soup were my present medicines. How different from the old treatment!

Dec. 9th, 1854.

I write to you, dearest friend, to thank your dear husband for a most kind letter. . . . Well! we

will talk of Madame Sand; through Henry Chorley's kindness I have been reading her memoirs in the *feuilletons* of the "Presse." What a charming pedigree it is!—her father grandson, or great grandson, of Marshal Saxe—which, as the Marshal was the natural son of Augustus, King of Poland, makes this reddest of Republicans one of the nearest relatives of Louis XVIII., and the descendants of Charles X. much nearer than the Orleans branch—whilst her grandfather, by the mother's side, was a little *oiseleur* who sold song birds upon the Pont Neuf. This and some exquisite bird stories thereunto belonging, have great interest for me just now. About a month or two ago a robin came and tapped at my window, and finding his appeal answered, that a little tray was fixed for him outside the window sill and kept well supplied with bread-crumbs, he not only returned himself but has brought all his friends and kinsfolk; you cannot think what pleasure this gives me. I am too far sunk in my chair to see them feed, but I can watch their approach, and guess at the strangers by their shyness. I can see them flutter, and even hear them twitter and peck at their food. Poor little things they watch me, too, I hope with equal pleasure. I fully believe that they know my good will and return it. To come back to Madame Sand. There are admirable letters between her father and grandmother, letters on the part of "bonne maman," which have traits worthy of Madame de Sevigné, traits of jealous fondness, very like that delicious letter-writer; and the young soldier's account of the crossing the Alps at the Campaign of Italy, is full of life and spirit. But I am afraid—indeed I feel certain—that this cor-

respondence has been touched up; and with all their grace and beauty there is a want of truthfulness about the memoirs. We are reading a capital "pedigree" for the exceptional woman, not for the facts as they happened.—Do you know "Mary Powell," * and those other books, of which the chief fault is that they are all too much alike? I never saw the writer, Miss M——, but we had a good deal of correspondence, and I was charmed with her letters—the personal character they unconsciously displayed. For some months I had heard nothing of her, but she wrote to me the other day with the "Old Chelsea Bun House" (very well worth reading, by the way), and her letter is most touching. It seems she has a mortal disease, and having resigned herself to die without any further expense of consultation or misery of examination, her composure and piety are most enviable.

Also I have been reading a dissenting novel, written by a young friend of mine, whose uncle has (I suppose) just been returned for Abingdon, her grandmother, who died on her seventy-seventh birthday, lying dead in the house. This book has provoked me past expression: it is so full of artistic faults, that the mere cutting away textual repetitions would reduce the book from three volumes to two, and it forfeits all claim to interest by adopting half

* One of the rather too large family of imaginary records and diaries, which were produced in emulation or imitation of that most successful piece of mystification—"Lady Willoughby's Diary"—a book which, on its appearance, puzzled half the London wits and authors; and, like "Cecil"—though belonging to quite another world—was ascribed to some of the most distinguished among them. —C.

a dozen heroes and heroines. But as a dissenting novel it opens new ground, and giving the "scene" in Abingdon, a pretty quaint old town, it has the enormous advantage of making you look at real scenes instead of trying to describe an imaginary locality—besides which the book is full of character, large-hearted, large-minded, bold, and true—striking to right and left, and in full front, High Church, Low Church, and Sectary—but faithful to the gospel, as she views it. Do read the book; you will often disagree with the writer, but you will feel that she is an able, honest, true-hearted girl. I love her much, and am provoked at her idleness—you should have seen the lecture I sent her. God bless you, my dear friend.

P.S.—I am turning over Judge Edmunds's "Spiritualism," a most painful book. Has Mr. Ouvry looked at it? and Sir George Nicholls? It seems to me very sad.

December 26, 1854.

. . . . . Have you seen John Ruskin's "Giotto" book? I think his description of those plates, and of their printer, is even more eloquent than his usual writings. He quite forgets in his love for the *naïf* old painter that he is painting *him*; and his eloquence is different from his usual style, more rapid, more fervent. He actually takes you by storm. I am talking of the plates published by the Arundel Society, and of his book illustrating them. The head and tail-pieces are beautiful, and this is what

he is about now—teaching such workmen as have an eye for colour and form, to enlarge the borders of illuminated MSS., to form the decorations of houses. Most beautiful were the specimens he showed me, from one foot to two feet wide, bold and striking in colour, and infinite in grace and variety of outline. The other day (a fortnight back) he wrote to me on my birthday, with the pretty wish that he and those who loved me could give me a day of their lives. I remember a friend of my own, expressing the same wish to good old Dr. B——, thirty years ago; I see he is just gone in his hundredth year. It seems as if her wish had taken effect. Did Mr. Ouvry know him? He was always very kind to me. I get weaker, but God is very merciful to me.

Mrs. B——'s residence in Italy does her no good. Fancy her thinking Louis Napoleon ought to take up the cause of those wretched Italians; and I hear from all quarters, that they get into corners, and slander each other. It is an extinct people, sending up nothing better than smoke, and cinders, and ashes; a mere name, like the Greeks.*

I grieve to say, that my letters from America speak of all business there, especially the book-trade, as more stagnant than was ever known. I hear the same in the English market.

* The year in which we are living—1871—surely tells a different tale from this.—C.

January 1st, 1855.

I must write just one line of earnest good wishes to you, and to dear Mr. Ouvry, dearest friend. I have placed the photograph with others, dear and interesting to me, between the leaves of a little Bible, one hundred and eighty six years old, with silver clasps. My mother used it to the last, and she died in her eightieth year, but that old small print, with long p's, tries the sight, and the weight of the binding, and clasps, and tips tries me, so I have been obliged to have an octavo Bible cut up, and the Old Testament detached, and made into two volumes, without heavy binding. Sam did it for me, as cleverly as any professed book-binder.* Should not you have expected that I should have been able to procure the Old Testament in a separate form? Mr. Pearson went to enquire for it at the Christian Knowledge Society in London, but they had no copy, and had never, they said, been asked for any. Surely other persons accustomed to the New Testament, in a lighter form, must be desirous of procuring the companion book. The Catholics have them apart. Lady Russell says . . . . My hunting friend does not hunt at Torquay. I quite understand what you say of invalid ladies; they hang their heads on one side, talk with an inaudible voice, whine mental and bodily, and dwell altogether on their own sufferings, and their own symptoms. Now *we* cannot do this, and so I really believe that, except to doctors and clergymen, and the very few intimate friends, who have seen me frequently, even my state of extremity has been doubted.—*Now* that can hardly happen, for the voice is failing, and I grow so

weak, that even the good spirits cannot bear up, beyond a few minutes; in short, dearest Mrs. Ouvry, I am sensibly worse.

Have you seen Alfred Tennyson's fine poem, "The Charge of the Light Brigade," printed in the "Examiner," some weeks ago?. Several persons mentioned it to me, and tried to get it for me, but since the Post-office has undertaken to do so much much has been left undone, and till this morning this fine lyric never arrived. It is a grand war song: except one or two of Campbell's, I know nothing of the sort finer in the language.

I have neither room nor strength to fight our Italian battles; we should come closer at the conclusion than in the beginning. I go on those best acquainted with the Italians, whether on their own soil or in England, where, they tell me, two or three get into corners, and spend their time in slandering some rival clique. Heaven bless you, beloved friend, and all whom you love.

The following Letters are undated.—C.

I have but a moment, my dear friend, in which to send you the enclosed autographs; only too happy to offer anything that may afford the slightest pleasure to your brother, and to the grand-daughter of W. Wordsworth. To answer your question: "The Two Noble Kinsmen" has always been attributed to Shakespeare and Fletcher, and I (although persuaded that Fletcher could have written it alone)

yet like to think of the union. The next time I see Mr. Dyce (unrivalled in the knowledge of old dramatic poetry, and the best editor of Beaumont and Fletcher); I will ask him what he thinks of the matter. He and Mr. Harness spent a day with me, a few weeks ago, and a very delightful day I found it—they are charming persons. Do read "Gisippus," Gerald Griffin's most original play. It is full of beauty. And do read his life, and letters, more interesting than any romance.—"Notre Dame de Paris" is a very striking book, but is painful. After all it is as a great lyrical poet, that Victor Hugo will live. Have you read Lamartine's "Histoire des Girondins," and "Les Memoires des Contemporaines, illustres par un Homme de Rien?" Both are full of interest. I had a letter a day or two ago from Mrs. Browning. Except five days at the monastery of Vallombrosa, to which she was dragged in a grape basket, without wheels, drawn by two oxen, and from whence she and her maid were turned by the monks for the sin of womanhood . . . of herself as fabulously happy, and quite well. They are to pass this winter at Rome. How is Mrs. Quillinan now? and the clever young Irishwoman, Thomas Davis's *fiancée?* I always think of her with so much interest.

Of course, going to church once a day, or twice a day on a Sunday, is good for everybody; but four times a day, every day in the week, as the charity children do at Reading, must weary them.

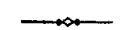
I heard a magnificent sermon last Sunday, from a young dissenting minister, who will be another Robert Hall, if he lives;—but he spits blood every

Monday, and the chance is, that he will die of over exertion. His sermon was on death.

I was beginning to think that it was my silence that was to blame, dearest Mrs. Ouvry, when I received your most welcome letter. I wish I was near you with all my heart, and can well fancy that a clerical neighbourhood, of all shades of opinion, all agreeing to live happily together, is most honourable, and most delightful to all parties. Here we have two or three clergymen, of great cultivation and intelligence,—Mr. Wilmott who does duty at the new church at Bearwood, and has written some pleasant books—a "Life of Jeremy Taylor," and "Summer Time in the Country," and Mr. Hugh Pearson, of Sonning, who has written no book that I know of, but who has the mind and the taste of a fine poet—a most charming person. London collects the superior men of other professions, so that in the country, the clergy are generally the men of the highest education; and it seems to me, that in your circle of small towns, and large villages, society is upon a pleasanter footing than amongst what is called the county families, here in Berkshire, whose stiff dinners are really such a trial to one's patience, that I have fairly given them up. We have had an artist in our little hamlet this autumn, making a splendid interior of an old wheelwright's shop, with the light streaming up to the high open roof, and bringing out a thousand curious details. It is

a capital picture, and will, I think, do much good to the painter, a young man of the name of Pasmore. Then Mr. Phillips has just been here, with what he calls a musical poem, composed rather to the title than anything else of "Our Village"—musically, nothing can be better, and his splendid voice gives grace to everything—else he might as well have called it anything else.—Mr. Bennett, too, has just published his poems, a charming volume; and Mr. Kingsley, whom, although living within twelve miles, I have never seen, has made a great sensation, with his "Alton Locke"—have you seen it? I have not, but I have no doubt of its being striking, and full of power. So was his "Saint's Tragedy," although both that and the papers signed "Yeast," in "Fraser," which are also I believe his, seemed to me singularly painful and inconclusive. . . . Are you not sorry for this folly of the Pope? I am, chiefly because it excites that bad thing, a religious cry, and sets good Protestants in a flame of intolerance, just by way of vindicating freedom of conscience! The Germans, too, how crazy they are; the only person one looks at with any real satisfaction is Louis Napoleon. I always had a great fancy for him, and really his speeches and messages vindicate my admiration, especially this last message, in which he accomplishes the difficult task of speaking of himself with grace, truth, and modesty. There is about him a calm dignity, most unlike the turbulent and unquiet nation over which he rules. Have you seen Lamartine's "Geneviève?" The virtue of the heroine, is made to rest upon a most gratuitous falsehood, she taking the shame of an illegitimate

child, to save the reputation of a dead sister. And this exaggeration, worthy of Madame de Genlis, M. de Lamartine calls sublime!—Yes, I have seen "The Prelude," and should be sorry that anything so wordy and so disappointing had been published, only that, by a most just law, the bad dies, and the good remains,—quite enough of very fine will be left to maintain the fame of William Wordsworth.



It is indeed very, very long, dearest Mrs. Ouvry, since we met—a large piece of your past, and a still larger of my future. We must meet (D.V.) next year, that is, if it please God to grant me life, and a little more strength; at present I am so weak, that I could not stand half a day's talking and excitement; Mr. May sends me off to bed, after walking a mile. . . . But still I have much for which to be thankful; the kindness of many friends—yours, dearest Mrs. Ouvry, amongst the most valued—the attention of a very faithful and intelligent servant, invaluable to one who lives alone; and the great comfort of not having, in the slightest degree, lost my interest in life, or my vivid pleasure in literature. Can you tell me anything about Mr. Whiteside, Mr. Smith O'Brien, or Mr. Meagher? Of course I agree with all the world in reprobating the foolish and wicked attempt at rebellion,—still, adversity seems to have brought out fine points in Mr. O'Brien's character. One admires the calmness, and constancy, evinced under such trials, both by

himself and his wife. And the poor young enthusiastic poet, has a poet's and an enthusiast's licence for his misadventures;—whilst the great orator has no drawback to the admiration excited by his genius. What chiefly struck me was the absence of Irish faults in his speeches. Mr. Serjeant Talfourd told me yesterday, that Mr. Whiteside was a lad at Chitty's, with him; but he assisted Mr. Chitty for some years with law reports, and pleadings, after he had ceased to be a pupil, so that Mr. Whiteside is, probably, the younger of the two (the Serjeant is fifty-two and a half). By the way, he did not admire the speech at all.—Did not you? Is the Mr. Savage, who was dining at the Lord Lieutenant's, the author of the "Falcon Family?" You have not brought the best of Ch. de Bernard's novels; they are "Gerfaut," and "La Femme de Quarante Ans," but "Le Gentilhomme Campagnard" is anything but dull, it is full of character. As to "Un Grand Homme de Province à Paris,"* that has the fault of being one out of the middle of a series, like, for instance, the second volume of "Waverley," but it is magnificently powerful, and, I am afraid, terribly true. They are a very sad set those French *littérateurs*, but full of genius.

I rejoice to hear of you, dearest Mrs. Ouvry, although I have only a moment in which to say so. I always think of you and Mr. Ouvry as types of that which is best and happiest in English life—the

* By Balzac.

country clergyman and his excellent wife (the best curate) doing good by act, and word, and example, and enjoying that mixture of domestic comfort, literature, and usefulness, which comes as near to perfect felicity as anything can do in this world—even now again shut into my room with a fire day and night:—the weather this year, the wet summer, the wet autumn, and now this early winter, have been fearfully against me. One warm week would have done much for my case, they say. . . . With all this I have unwisely undertaken to bring out *two* works this spring—a collected edition of my dramatic works, in two vols., and a new tale, almost a novel, to head some old ones, in three. So you see I cannot write again until this labour is out of hand. When I undertook it, I thought to be better, and the booksellers won't let me off. Margaret de Thavies is going to be married; I have a letter from her to-day to say so. The young couple are to live on an estate he has just purchased in Tipperary. Also I have to-day a delightful account of Hawthorne, from one who says he is very shy and timid, but most charming and genial when he feels he is with a friend. Read "Haydon's Life."

—◇—

I send you even a tinier scrap than usual, my dear Mrs. Ouvry, in return for your charming letter. One cause is, that for three months I have had a feverish complaint hanging about me. . . . Another is, that I am exceedingly busy. After refusing all

entreaties to write for seven or eight years, I have at last promised Henry Chorley to help him in the "Lady's Companion," which he has undertaken to edit. I am to give him Readings from Poetry, with introductions; and I want to get as much that is unknown to the present generation as I can, and as much variety. Among scarce books I am in chase of the "Pleader's Guide," by Anstey, a son of the "Bath Guide" man, but infinitely better. Can your father or your uncle help me in this? We have hunted old book shops in vain, and it must be sought among barristers of their standing. I shall have so much pleasure in doing justice to the Irish poets, Gerald Griffin and Thomas Davis, whom the English do not know as poets at all. Of course my contributions will make a volume; and even the thing itself, got up by Bradbury and Evans, and edited by such a person as Henry Chorley, will be a totally different affair to what it was in Mrs. Loudon's hands. He came to me, having written many letters to other people, and, being my pet friend, I could not resist him. I quite agree with you about the necessity for amusement for the people. If it were not for those detestable beer-houses there would be no difficulty in the matter. They are the bane of England, and perhaps the way to keep the people away from them is to give them pleasures elsewhere. . . . I have just gone through Tennyson's new work on his friend Mr. Hallam—too much in one strain, but exquisitely finished.*

* "In Memoriam."

Will you accept half a dozen words, dearest friend, in reply to your two charming letters. I have been very poorly indeed. . . . I have been compelled to defer my Paris trip till the autumn. Yes, I think Sir Robert's plan does promise something. It seems bold and large, like the man, who is certainly in his heart the greatest reformer in the country; but then I speak in ignorance of Ireland. You, who know it, what do you think? . . . You are quite right about the man Rush.* It is a strange drama. One of my oldest and dearest friends, Emily Jephson, has a brother and sister married among those poor Jermys, and sent me a most vivid letter from her little niece, Isabella Jermy, the young girl who was in the drawing-room, and ran away screaming. It was a most life-like portrait of the scene.—Have you read "Les Confiances" and "Raphael?" "Raphael" is certainly a continuation of the first book; and it is unspeakably droll to see a man who calls himself poet, orator, historian, statesman, come out in the character of a lady-killer: for he makes *two* women die of love for his fine person, and they are the subjects of the two books. Think if Mr. Macaulay were to talk of two women, one married, dying of love for him! However, I always did think M. de Lamartine a mere man of words, and next to being borne out in an enthusiasm, one likes to be justified in a prejudice. Is not Louis Napoleon behaving well? You asked me, dear friend, if those school stories were true—yes, to the letter. The poor Polish girl died early.

* The murderer.

Your letter is one of those that *will* be answered, dearest Mrs. Ouvry. Ah! how I wish we were sitting together over the fire here or at Wing Vicarage, so as not to need the slower process of writing our talk; but as we cannot have one sort of chat we must be content with the other. . . . . My fancy for the Prince (whom I have never even seen, and who in all probability never heard of me in his life) was first derived from my old idolatry of Napoleon, and from reading during two or three years everything written about them all—Napoleon, Josephine, Hortense—four or five hundred volumes at the least. Then I got interested in him, for I happened to hear a good deal of him from people intimate with him in England, and fancied the calm, simple, unaffected, studious young man. Some of the things I heard, too, showed a very sweet and true nature. I'll tell you one. When first in England, before the Boulogne affair, he passed a year at Leamington, living in the quietest manner. Mr. Hampden, brother of the bishop, and one of the principal inhabitants of the place, paid him great attention, and they became intimate. An old Pole, who had served under Napoleon, had been established for some years at Leamington as a language-master, and Mr. Hampden used to meet him constantly with Louis Napoleon, whose manner to him was more that of a relation than a patron. At last, when the Prince was about to leave Leamington, he called upon Mr. Hampden to thank him for his constant kindness to himself, and to say that he had a parting favour to beg—that that kindness might be trans-

ferred to his poor old friend. "He will not trouble you long," said he; "his health is failing fast; but it would be a comfort to me to know that he had somebody to keep him from a mercenary *entourage;* and, besides, I am sure that you would have the goodness to draw upon my banker for what might be wanted for his little comforts, and I don't think he would." Mr. Hampden promised to do this, and so far kept his word as to draw for half the sums expended upon the poor language-master, who soon died, and whose last illness and burial were provided for at their expense; Louis Napoleon having most carefully left at his banker's orders to answer Mr. Hampden's drafts. Now this came to me as a mere matter of business two or three years ago: a most commonplace acquaintance of Mr. Hampden's and mine having been introduced by him with a letter to Prince Louis Napoleon, then at the Elysée, begging him to send one line to the parish officers, authorizing them to deliver to him a portrait of the Prince, which he had given to his poor old friend, and which the parish authorities persisted in detaining. My acquaintance had jotted this pretty story of the two exiles down in his memorandum-book, just as he afterwards jotted down a commission which I gave him for a bottle of French perfume. But I have faith in a nature such as that. It appeared, too, that he (the Prince) had constantly sent to Mr. Hampden his different works, and whatever might show his remembrance, whether from Ham or from the Elysée. I have not seen the Margaret Fuller biography, nor do I very much care

to see it. In the first place I doubt if the Americans have a readable biography in all their literature: it is their great want. In the next, I never could comprehend the sort of talent claimed for Margaret Fuller. Nobody is more ready than I am to admit that the very cleverest people are those who have written little or nothing. I have always said and believed that such is the fact—among women especially. My friend Miss Goldsmid is an example of this; and there are many others. But then Margaret Fuller was always writing, and never produced anything of the least merit. They say she was just about to write a great book—a book of the highest power—but then not a page was written, so it is mere matter of faith. I remember a Miss Jewsbury of twenty years ago (the sister, I believe, of the present authoress) for whom similar claims were put forth, equally without proof. She married a missionary, went to India, and died.—Does the biographer notice that the Italian husband * had had it foretold to him that he should be drowned in the sea? He told this to some friends of mine the last night he spent in Florence. Thank you for your most kind congratulations about my book. The kindness that I have experienced about it has given me great pleasure. I hope you will like it, and by help of your partiality (which I don't pretend to wish less) perhaps you may. . . . What do you think of the change of ministry? I bemoan Lord Carlisle, for whom, although I have never seen him, and he may never have heard of me,

* Count Ossoli, who married Margaret Fuller.

I have a sort of personal liking for him. There is a charm of character about all he does; those two lectures are full of it. I do not like him the less for what he said of your father. And now good-bye.

Letters to Miss and Lady Russell.

Three Mile Cross, Jan. 27th, 1849.

Only those who are as dependent as I am, dearest Miss Russell, upon books and, I had almost said, books only, for companionship and delight, can imagine the gratification and the gratitude with which, on my return home yesterday evening, I contemplated the magnificent packet which I owe to Sir Henry's kindness and to yours. I thank you both a thousand times. I can hardly tell you how, from the bottom of my heart, I feel your attention and your goodness. Dumont's admirable volume I had read, and parts of the "Discours," and the first three volumes of Lucas and Montigny's curious "Mémoires," and a work of Mirabeau's on "Le Despotisme," and another on "Les Lettres de Cachet," and bits and fragments here and there; but I see that there is much that is new to me, and very much that is interesting; and Sir Henry's admirable criticism sheds a new light on the man and on his powers. Truly, that faculty of selection was almost better than originality in his position. It was a wonderful mind, and has impressed me much more strongly now that I took up his works almost by accident, than when I read many of them several years ago. In the Brussels edition of Lucas Mon-

tigny's "Mémoires" there is an "Etude" on Mirabeau, by Victor Hugo, who has since published an entire edition of his writings. I shall bring it to Swallowfield some day next week, for I think that Sir Henry would like to see it. It is very short and very striking.

Be quite sure that I shall take all possible care of the books, for the loan of which I am so much indebted. I have papered each volume, and shall only take out one at a time.

You and I love biography so much that I do not apologize for recommending, if you happen not to have read them, Mr. Milnes's "Life of Keats," and Leslie's "Life of Constable,"—especially the last.

Swallowfield, April 29th, 1852.

Do not, I beseech you, think me impertinent in intruding upon a grief so sacred and so sweet. I know that you and dear Lady Russell need no assurance of my sympathy; and yet I cannot feel satisfied without saying how deeply I join with all who knew him in lamenting the death of the great and good man who has just been summoned to a happier world, leaving to his children that of which even death cannot bereave them—the rich inheritance of his reputation and and his example.

Besides the eminent public services recognised by races so various, and acknowledged by parties who agree in little else, the private character of Sir Henry Russell always seemed to me to unite in the

happiest combination those qualities which command admiration, affection, and respect. His rare accomplishments, his extensive and accurate knowledge, his great conversational power, the charm of his manner, or rather, of that unfailing benevolence which manner only imitates, rendered him the most interesting and delightful of companions. An exquisite judge and keen lover of literature, he joined the fervent application of youth to the bland indulgence of age, and, loving the highest best, was tolerant of every style so that it were distinguished by purity and truth.

Of what he was in his nearer and dearer connections, of his constancy in friendship, his excellence as a master and a landlord, as brother, husband, and father, the regrets of those whom he has left behind speak eloquently, and will speak long. And yet, dearest Miss Russell, the very virtues which now add to your sorrow will, as that sorrow melts into tender recollection, become the sweet sources of comfort to those who love him best.

Do not trouble yourself to write, only send me word how you all are. I trust that this rain will bring with it milder winds, and restore you to the genial influences of Nature—ever a consoler to those who love her, as you do—and to your accustomed walks amongst the spring flowers and the budding trees.

May 1852.

Ah, dearest Miss Russell, if you did but know how delightful it is to me to feel a young, warm heart responding to my own feelings, and trusting, with such earnest kindness, in the truth and sincerity of my sympathy! You said, some months ago, when I was talking of my own short-sightedness, "that I always knew you," and the observation was true in more senses than one.—I always have known you; and I trust the time will come when we shall meet often, and change thought for thought. In the meantime, my dear young friend, let me entreat you to get as much as possible into the air. I have a strong faith in the strengthening and invigorating power of the very simplest scenery, especially at this season. The grass beneath our feet, the trees above our heads, the birds that flutter around us, all tend insensibly to soothe and to cheer; and now that the last sad parting has been taken, the memory so justly cherished will become, not less dear, but less painful; and you have been too much accustomed to an out-of-door life to remain within with impunity. In spite of my incapacitating helplessness, I contrive to get out as often as possible; and when once the east wind shall change, I do hope that my knees and ancles will regain some little power. When that most comfortable change may occur is very doubtful. Just before the last too brief rain, Professor Airy told my friend, Mr. Lucas, that we must look for five weeks longer of east wind and drought. I hoped that the rain had come to falsify his prediction; but really this return to the old quarter looks as if the great astronomer were right,

and as if May would be as un-English as April. What a blessing it will be to see a good, honest, drenching shower, and to feel that leaves and flowers are sprouting forth, almost visibly, under the sweet influence.

I have a curious bit of Welsh biography by post to-day—an account of a self-educated man, in whom Southey took much interest, and which is interesting as a specimen of individuality. Almost all biography is interesting when truthful. I shall send this when I have read it and answered the writer's letter. You will soon see if you think it worth looking through.

May 7th, 1852.

I thank you, dearest Miss Russell, for thinking of me at this time, and being sure how very glad I should be to contribute in any way whatever to put aside sad thoughts for a while. You are quite right in applying to works of imagination for that purpose. It is, perhaps, their best and highest destiny. I send some, I hope all, that you have mentioned. Mr. Kingsley (who is himself writing a work near that date) told me that I was the only person out of his own family who he had ever heard mention "Valerius,"* which I send; and, by-the-way, *he* has still my "Letters from Palmyra," and from Rome, of which he himself had never heard until I mentioned them to him. The moment he returns them they shall be sent to you. The author (Mr. Ware) is just dead. You know, of

* By Lockhart.

course, that Miss Ferrier's two novels had the highest praise of Scott, and that O'Connell preferred the "Collegians" to any novel in the language. I add one of Banim's, for the sake of the principal character, Father Connell, a Catholic priest, more beautifully delineated than any character, except the Vicar of Wakefield, and said to be a portrait of Father O'Leary. I add, also, a very striking volume by Edgar Poe, an American writer, whose personal history is most painful and disgusting—but some of the tales, especially those which relate to circumstantial evidence, seem to me wonderful for their faithfulness and originality.

I am afraid that I have detained your messenger, having been out driving through the Duke's park. This continued east wind has increased my lameness so much that I am compelled to give up any attempt at walking, and am most thankful to get the sweet sight of verdure and opening leaves from my pony-chaise.

I have to apologize for the first part of this note, dearest Miss Russell, which must seem to you all confusion. As soon as I came in, and saw what you wanted, I gave your list to my little maid, not being able to reach the books myself, and did not see that you had mentioned "Father Connell;" and now I find not only that you did name it, but that the book itself is not to be found. I trust that it will turn up. If it do, I will be sure to send it to you, and will look out some more that may perhaps interest you. Forgive all my blunders.

May 15th, 1852.

Shall I come to see you on Monday? I will, unless you forbid it. There is just a chance that I might have some one from London — or from America; but then I should know, and would let you know. I shall so rejoice to see you again, my dear young friend. I send you two letters from Paris, which I think will interest you. I confess to a real enthusiasm for Louis Napoleon, not lessened by the injustice and the falsehoods of the English papers, and certainly much increased by certain stories which I have heard of him and know to be true, and which I will tell you when we meet. I add another letter of Mrs. Browning's, which I think you have not seen, and which contains a sweet and womanly bit of pity for that very great, very erring, and very pitiable creature George Sand. I had another interesting letter yesterday from a friend of half a century, Mrs. Trollope, who was *raised* (as her friends the Americans would say) in our near neighbourhood, the vicarage, at Heckfield, and who is now at Florence—and a most curious one from the wife of President Sparks, the head of the great American College, Cambridge, near Boston, wishing me to go and live with them for two or three years. Ah, dearest Miss Russell, they little guess what a poor helpless creature they would cumber themselves with! I am lamer than ever, although otherwise well, and forced to be lifted in and out of the pony-chaise; but I got to Silchester yesterday, and found the drive and the view of the woods delicious—and wished for you.

Do you know those lovely coppices? I mean on the farther side of the common, beyond the walls.

May 1852.

Yes, dearest Miss Russell, I must have the bench under the yew tree. *We* must have it for long talks in summer days. I was saying so only yesterday. Lady Conroy and her daughter were here yesterday—making me ashamed, by their ready and constant kindness, of my seemingly ungrateful neglect—but I have been busy, and poorly, and am always the very worst visitor that lives. Miss Conroy was less well than the day before—but she is certainly mending—and I hope will not be the worse for Mrs. Browning's letter, which I lent her, and some American books—for she likes literature, and seemed to me to be in want of that sort of amusement. We agreed most heartily in our talk of *you*, and, indeed, of your whole family—especially of the great and good man who is gone. There is about Lady Conroy and Miss Conroy, and indeed, I think, about all of them, a power of appreciation and a constant kindness which I value very highly. I have an Irish correspondent whom I have never seen, who was the favourite correspondent of Maria Edgeworth, to whom I must introduce you some day or other. He is a very clever man—Digby Starkey by name—and having lived in literary widowhood since her death, has adopted me as a sort of epistolary second wife—a very unworthy one. I

have just had a letter from him, which put him in my head.

May 1852.

I do not know how to apologize for the terrible puzzle-headedness of my note yesterday—nor, indeed, how to account for it—except that the confusion of my books has crept into my brains, and that my lameness has induced a singular helplessness of the whole person. I have leant so much upon my hands that my right side is strained, and I can hardly turn in bed, or open a drawer, or reach down a book. Warm weather will relieve this, no doubt; surely we may expect some change soon. I send Lockhart's, two works, which I so unaccountably omitted last night. "Father Connell" is still missing. That charming character is so much my favourite that I suppose I have lent it. However, I shall certainly procure another copy if that do not turn up. These cheap books are easily replaced, and I have a large stock of them. I take the chance of your not knowing Cooper's exciting stories of land and sea to send you some of his best. I remember administering the "Last of the Mohicans" to Lady Madalina Palmer (I suppose upon the principle of counter-irritation) during the heats of a contested election, which lasted eight days. She declared it saved her from a fever. I send, also, Lady Morgan's two clever Irish tales, which Scott praises so warmly—the wonder is, that having written these two she *could* be guilty of so much

trash. Also I add one of Mr. James's best novels. We are very ungrateful to Mr. James. Everybody reads him, and everybody cries him down—for my part I like his graphic descriptions, and his constant accuracy to the country and the time. I have many more of his if this should please you.

You will think I mean to crush you under the weight of light reading—but sometimes one book takes one's fancy, sometimes another; and they are easily put aside.

June 1852.

Did Sir Paul Hunter see you on Saturday? And did he convey to you my message? He seemed to me a very fit transmitter of the affectionate and the true, and I asked him to tell you that whenever you wished to see me you had only to send. I should be sure to come unless I had anybody coming to me, and then I could let you know. Besides Mrs. President Sparks's invitation to go to her for two or three years—man and maid, Fanchon and pony, I have had a perfect avalanche of kindness from America—letters, some addressed to Mr. Fields, but all meant for me, from Longfellow, and Whittier, and Whipple, and Giles, and Holmes, and Hawthorne, full of a warmth and reality such as does one's heart good. Mr. Whipple (the best American critic) has seen Mr. Hawthorne's new work, not published yet nor printed, waiting, I suppose, for my dear Mr. Fields, and says that it exceeds in power and in beauty the

"Scarlet Letter" and "The House of the Seven Gables." They are reprinting Dr. Holmes in London.

August 10th, 1852.

Taking for granted that your literary hunger and thirst resemble mine, and can only be assuaged by the one-desired book, I send the third volume. When I talked of Margaret Fuller yesterday, I had only read the first. Although impressed by her power, by her resolute truth, and her strong sense of duty, her arrogance and presumption, had caused me to feel only an imperfect sympathy; but from the moment she arrived at New York my interest went on increasing, until at last it became painfully intense. Never surely was a deeper tragedy! I had known the termination of her life from the newspapers, from American friends, and from the Brownings, at whose house the Ossolis spent the last evening of their stay at Florence, and where the poor Marchese recalled the fatal prophecy—"Beware the sea!" Mrs. Browning told the story quite calmly, as a remarkble verification of a prediction. I was quite astonished at the interest of the book, for everybody who has named it to me has done so in disparaging terms. "A strange work!" "An odd story!" "An eccentric woman!" "Poor, poor Margaret!" I send the "Blythedale Romance" also, because Mr. Hawthorne confesses that Blythedale is Brook Farm, where he spent some time, and because I have no sort of doubt but

Zenobia is meant for Margaret, embellished in person according to the custom of novelists. If I had taken her for a heroine, I should have left her plain, as adding to her triumphs. I am so sorry to have missed dear Lady Russell, and Mr. B——, and Miss H——, and your dear self, but I had meant to go to see Miss D——, as you know; and she made the visit inevitable by calling and refusing to get out, and insisting on my coming. It rained as I returned, but I was too well wrapt up to be damaged.

Sept. 13th, 1852.

Thanks a thousand times, my dear young friend, for your unwearied kindness. K—— says that the pillow is perfect. I am sure I should think it so, coming from you.

I cannot tell you how glad I am that you were not disappointed in Mr. Harness's preaching. His earnestness seems to me the great charm. Knowing him as we do, the truth of his own feeling sends it straight to our hearts. He confessed to me that he sometimes got so touched by the subject that it had happened to him to cry in preaching his own sermons. I can understand this. Last night he read me one of Miss Goldsmid's "Translations of Solomon's Jewish Sermons," a German Jew of a most Christian spirit. He is so struck by them that he has commissioned me to ask for a copy for himself.

I rejoice in the prospect of seeing you all to-morrow. Ah! he must come back again. I cannot

afford to lose such evenings; but I think he will, and your family will have no small share in the attraction.

September 1852.

With the two lovely papers, I send one from Norwich, because I wish you to read an admirable critique on Mr. Pierson's "Oratorio." It completely conveys to me the high ambition of the composer, who has tried to convey events and emotions to *describe* the march of an invading army by noiseless sound. You who understand at once great music and good writing will, I think, be much struck by this account of the Roman march. I can't believe that it was written by a professional critic.* It is much too high toned for the caste.

You must read the "May Day Fancies" before Saturday, or let me "put them into you," as you said one day, for I want you to like Mr. Bennoch.

* Nothing, in my experience of musical performances, has been more singular than the resolution of unmusical persons to set forth the composer here named as a man of misunderstood genius. I have never known a stronger case of "pressure from without" on professional critics, by a gentleman's self and friends, than was exercised in this case. But the result of these efforts to force and cajole a success was what must have been foreseen by any one capable of forming an opinion, unbiassed by personal regard.—C.

Sept. 26th, 1852.

I send you, dearest friend, Mr. Pearson's and Mr. Boner's letters, and Mr. Bennoch's poem. Many an inferior one has made a great reputation, but he throws these things off with the most affluent rapidity (exquisitely finished as they are), and thinks in all things little of himself, and most of his friends—a most rare and precious quality! In Friday's "Times" you will find in the Court of Common Council a very long and interesting speech of his on the subject of a new bridge, which will be most welcome to your friends at Albury, as to mine at the Deepdene, because it will enable them to reach the Reigate Railway without the fearful drag through the City. I am told that Mr. Bennoch is a very fine speaker, and that there is little doubt but that some day or other he will be one of the Members for London. Besides his talent, his information, and his exceeding geniality, he has unfailing spirits. I am a little ashamed of mine sometimes, and like to be kept in countenance, especially by so clever a person.

I have always thought of you and dear Miss Mary as realizing the words of Shakespeare—

> "Like to a double cherry, seeming parted,
> But yet an union in division."

And now that you will lose that fair half of yourself, you must come oftener to me—a very bad substitute!

You will be amused by a conversation which I held with Mrs. ——, or rather one that she held with me; for my part thereof consisted merely of civil monosyllables. I was afraid of talking much, lest I should laugh.

November 1852.

DEAREST LADY RUSSELL,

The enclosed will show you that it is a very curious case of literary plagiarism. One of these poems must be a translation of the other, and whichever be the original a very splendid translation too. The English stanzas are well known. They are claimed to be written by the Rev. Charles Wolfe (long since dead) on the "Burial of Sir John Moore." There has always been some doubt as to the authorship, chiefly on the ground of Mr. Wolfe's other verses being so very inferior; but of this French poem* I never heard till Mr. Blackstone brought it to me yesterday. He transcribed it years ago from a letter from a lady, which contained, he thinks, further particulars, but which cannot now be found. The "Mémoires" of Lally Tollendal, not being in Rolandi's catalogue, induced me to trouble you; for really, until one sees that French poem in a printed book, one can hardly help suspecting some hoax. Which do you think the original? In spite of one weak line, both Mr. Blackstone and I incline to the French. By the way, there seem to me to be faults in his transcript of the French lines, which he says arose from his transcribing literally the very words of his correspondent. After all, it is possible that nobody may be to blame; that Mr. Wolfe found the French poem, and translated it as wonderfully applicable to the circumstances of Sir John Moore's burial, and that it was found amongst his papers, and assumed to be his. I find, from a note appended to Mr. Wolfe's stanzas in the Irish ballad poetry,

* Quære,—by Father Prout.

that his original MS. is in the Irish Museum. I must get a friend to look at it there, and to see if there be any heading. It will make a very curious article in my new book, providing the French poem can be authenticated by Lally Tollendal's "Mémoires;" and even then so equal is the merit of the French and English poems that it must be a question of dates.

November 1852.

The books are come, but there is no list; and, as one hundred and forty-one volumes were such as I did not send for, I have sent them to be exchanged for those which I originally ordered; and they are all upon the floor in my room till then. I send, however, two little volumes which half a score of people have written and talked to me about, which you will find curious, translated by two French ecclesiastics in China and Thibet; and in a day or two I will send M. de Cormenin's brilliant work, "Le Livre des Orateurs," and I also send now the most interesting of Dumas's novels, "Le Chevalier de Maison Rouge." I think there is no harm in it; but you had better look it over yourself, because I never know, passing over such things from long habit without the least notice. It is founded on what I believe really happened—a plot for the rescue of poor Marie Antoinette from her murderers. I have not the "Mémoires" of Madame d'Abrantes, but I have her best work, which she certainly wrote herself, "Les Salons de Paris." It is very amusing.

I also send that. Have I dreamt, or did I hear that you, or some of your dear girls, had not read Lamartine's "Histoire des Girondins?" If it be so, dear Lady Russell, that also shall be sent, for I do believe that all these are *findable*. Have you the "Mémoires de Marmontel?" That is also under hand, and it is most charming; but it is probably in your own far richer library.

Letters to Richard Bentley, Esq.

Swallowfield, March 14th, 1853.

I have just sent off by train a copy of the "Recollections," as correct as I could make it; but I think it likely that some errors may still remain, especially in the Latin. Will you ask your printers (particularly of that part) to put them into the hands of a good reader? and will you let me have a few copies, as many as you can spare, of the new edition?

You will I know be sorry to hear that I am still confined to my room by the lameness consequent on my very serious accident three months ago; the nerves of the left hip were so much injured, that I can neither rise from my chair, nor stand upon my feet, nor put one foot before the other. I am still lifted into bed, and am quite unable to move when in it. However, my very skilful surgeon gives hope that warm weather will do much for me, and I have myself an intense faith in the open air, when I can once get transported downstairs and into the pony carriage.

August 8th, 1853.

I think it due to you and to myself to tell you of what has occurred in consequence of Mr. Colburn's retirement from business.

Some seven or eight years ago certain unpublished MSS. of mine had been placed in his hands, and we had even gone so far as to sign a mutual agreement with regard to them. That the matter terminated there for the time was altogether my fault. I was out of health, and shrank from the notion of immediate literary employment. But, upon being urged by my friend, Mr. Bennoch, to collect my dramatic works, we inquired for the unprinted tragedies which had formed a part of the MSS. sent to Great Marlborough Street, and I found not only that the whole packet had been carefully kept, but that its publication had formed a part of the transactions reckoned upon both by Mr. Colburn and his successors. Under these circumstances you will, I am sure, understand that those works remaining in *their* hands was inevitable; and that retaining the sincerest good will towards yourself, and without prejudice to any future series of "Recollections," if it should please God to spare my life—these publications, totally different in every respect, must issue from Messrs. Hurst and Blackett's.

August 13th, 1853.

Your letter was very gratifying to me, not merely on business accounts but for the kind assurances of personal esteem, which I very sincerely return.

The only drawback is the bad account of your health. I am myself very feeble, the only part of me spared being the head and the right hand, but that is much. I sincerely trust that your residence by the sea may quite remove the neuralgic affection which is mixed up with my affliction, and of which I well know the suffering.

I thought of you when reading the trial which has rendered an imperfect justice to those poor Hungarians. Madame Von Beck's death must always leave a stain on all concerned, and I should imagine that the social position of her persecutors must be sensibly affected by the indignation excited by their conduct. It ought to be so.

Mr. Hawthorne has not yet been able to quit Liverpool, and the time at which I shall see him is still uncertain ; probably towards the end of the month. I will not fail to deliver your message; but his English engagements will probably be influenced by his American publisher and intimate personal friend, Mr. Ticknor of Boston, who accompanied him to England, and is still in London.

Letters to Albinus Martin, Esq.

The following selection of letters cannot be published without a word. The steady and substantial friend to whom they were addressed aided Miss Mitford with sympathy, counsel, and efficient service during many years of her life. Not only was Mr. Martin unwearied, and intelligent, in watching over her dramatic interests—being more than ordinarily valuable as a counsellor, owing to his official position in one of the great London Theatres; but subsequently (when his friend was broken down in health, by pressure of debt, and fears of the future, consequent on the death of her worthless parent, for whom she had impoverished herself throughout her life), he originated and carried out that scheme of a subscription on her behalf, to which reference is made elsewhere. Besides the testimony of active kindness which these letters convey, they are interesting as affording yet another proof of the constant and steady friendship which she, to whom they are addressed, inspired among those who knew her intimately.—C.

(About) March 10th, 1840.

Nothing can exceed our ill-luck, my dear friend. My dear father's stick gave way this morning in London—he slipped from the step of his hotel—and fell with all his weight upon the pavement, breaking the small bone of his right arm. He would not suffer any surgeon to see it; and the fracture was not reduced until his arrival in Reading, eight hours after it occurred—a most tedious interval and a most painful journey. He is now at home and asleep, and, I hope, doing well; but it is impossible not to be anxious, and I shall have no comfort till I have seen Mr. May to-morrow. No news will be good news. I will write if he be worse. He got handsomely off from Saunders and Otley; was most cordially received by Colburn, who intends sending Mr. Shoberl, his factotum, to settle matters with me, on Tuesday, by the two-o'clock train, that which arrives at Twyford at two o'clock.

My father saw Mr. Dunn, so thanked him warmly. He seems to think that if Mr. Wallack should arrive, the theatre will be offered him on tempting terms, and that "Otto" may still be done. At all events, he is most kindly our friend, for which I thank you again and again; and in the still more probable event of there being a new lessee next season, and an actor arriving, we shall stand, through you and him, a very fair chance.

I rejoice in what you say of Miss B——'s piece. I had another offer for H——W *—— yesterday—the fifth, and by far the best, but, as you say, too

* A young lady for whom Miss M. was seeking to obtain a situation.

good, or rather too much required. German was the attraction. Make my kind love to her dear mother and to your own people. I must not write again, for these letters will be a tremendous job. Out of some thousands, all the best bits must be transcribed; and then they must be adjusted, put together, suited with new matter, and so transcribed, and all by my own hand.* Nevertheless, it will be a lively, graceful work.

(About) May 1810.

I thank you heartily, my dear friend, for all your kindness respecting "Otto." It is a part of energy and of despair; and there is a young man—the Mr. Balmanno of whom I spoke to you, and whom I saw once in "Othello"—who could, I verily believe, play it. He has tenderness and fire, as much perhaps as Kean himself; but whether he will take finally to the stage, or whether his very sensibility

* This refers to a proposed republication of early letters of Miss M.'s to Sir W. Elford, and others. It is impossible for any one to decide on the extent to which the process of retouching, here openly announced, was carried out by Miss Mitford. My impression is, that it was largely resorted to in the case of the Elford letters; since the efforts at smart writing which they contain, appear to me more clearly discernible than in any other series of the correspondence. It must be recollected, however, that it was the case of a girl writing to an accomplished and experienced man, whose notice was felt to be a flattering honour; and, as a general fact, that the young, betwixt inexperience and self-consciousness, are rarely so natural in expression as they become when the struggle with life is of less and less consequence, and the position which every one can hold becomes tolerably clear, to all who are honest.—C.

might not be against him in a new part, unless his success were previously established, there is no telling. My own impression is, that the passion for the drama is so strong in him that he will settle to no other profession, and will make a great hit in tragedy. . I should like you to see him. You will find Otto not much of a lover. He liked the Princess, and it was a fitting match, as he says himself; but it is the affront, and the treachery of Philip, that he resents; and, borne along by the course of events and his own vehemence (if acted with the proper fire), the notion of a mere common stage lover would never cross the mind of the spectator. The danger is not *there*, but in the want of pathos in the actor for the last trying acts, full as they are of incident. I really think Balmanno could do them as finely as Kean would have done. Our letters crossed; but I write now chiefly to say that my father is going on well, and that my health, which, last week, failed greatly, is better again. Mr. May says that, in a very short time, my father will be just as if *this* had not occurred; that it has not made him even a day older, or taken the slightest ill effect on his constitution; and that the use of his arm will be perfect. This is great comfort. At present, of course, he is quite disabled, and we are better alone.

May or June, 1842.

I cannot thank you enough, my dear Mr. Martin, for all your kindness. If Mr. Wallack do arrive, I verily believe that the chance of "Otto" will be

better than ever it has been; and I confess that I think his coming more likely than not. Should he fail us, I am quite sure that the best chance for the prosperity of the theatre would be the trial of Mr. Balmanno. I say this, however, without any consultation with him, or even knowing where he is, or whether he himself would like to incur the risk. My opinion *is* that Mr. Wallack will make his appearance, and that, mainly through your good offices, this poor play will, at last, be done. I think this the rather, since, in consequence of my present scheme of the Letters, it will put me to considerable hurry and inconvenience, which I have always noted to belong to the representation of any of my plays.

Thank Mr. Dunn most cordially and most gratefully for his great kindness in this matter. That, again, I owe mainly to your good offices; but both my father and myself feel it very strongly. He will be in town next week, about the literary scheme (which is still a secret), and by that time (wind permitting) the (live) cargo of the "Gladiator"* will be ascertained. If you hear anything important before, I am sure that you will let me know.

Early in Jan. 1843.

Writing to Mrs. Walter, amongst other tried friends, on the subject of your most kind proposal, I was more gratified than surprised to find that she and

* This was the play in which Mr. Forrest, the American tragedian, made his first appearance in England.

her husband answered my letter in person. Mr. Walter entered with great zeal into the plan for paying the debts (which must be *all* paid—all that are just, my dear, dear friend—if, by any means, it can be compassed; I shrink from the notion of a compromise), and after observing that it must be a private subscription, that Mr. Blandy must ascertain the amount, and then my dear father's brother magistrates should be applied to, he touched upon the subject of the pension, observed that it was too small, and suggested that the same magistrates should memorialise Mr. Robert Palmer, the county member, urging him to petition Sir Robert Peel for an increase, as in the case of Mrs. Somerville, and then I should, at the same time, apply to such friends as were likely to back up the application. This I shall not fail to do, feeling assured, however the matter may turn out as regards Sir Robert, that Mr. Walter will continue to manage the thing *here*. I have been into Reading, to inquire of Mr. Blandy if he has ascertained the amount of the debts, but was so unlucky as to miss him. I have, however, written to him, or rather to Mrs. Blandy, and have no doubt of sending you the amount in a few days. In the meanwhile, I have not suffered any false pride or false delicacy to stand in my way in letting my friends know the scheme in agitation, because, as there is none of the usual machinery of a subscription, no secretary, or committee, or advertisements, or lists of subscribers, the only way of getting the thing carried through is for every one to let as many people know of it as possible. It would be a great pity—having entered into the matter—if it failed

through this sort of negligence; and therefore awkward, very awkward, as it is for me to address people on the subject, I have done it. Will you have the goodness to let dear Miss Hughes know how the thing stands? and tell me whether you expect to hear from Mr. Blandy yourself, or whether I am to tell you the amount of the debts?

I hope you are all better than when I last heard *from* you, for my last news *of* you came through Miss Susan Hughes and Mr. Blandy, and most kind that news was.

Heaven bless you, my dear friend! Make my kindest regards to Mrs. Martin and your family, and believe me always most faithfully and gratefully yours.

One or two letters, in addition to the passages referring to the subject, which occur in the course of Miss Mitford's correspondence on other matters, will sufficiently show the cordiality of all classes in promoting the good work. Rarely has such a subscription list, brought together at so short a notice, been seen: nor can any one wonder, if one, quick and impressionable as Miss Mitford, should have so frankly expressed not merely the sense of material relief, but the elation of one recognised by such spontaneous liberality. She coloured everything too warmly, as her friend Mrs. Acton Tindal has pointed out; but the honesty with which she received what was so honestly given, without self-abasement or mock modesty, seems to me a marking and an attractive trait in her character.—C.

1843.

The enclosed, my dear friend, was written last night, and only delayed by the arrival of your very kind letter this morning. There *is* a little money—perhaps enough to pay these debts—but, at all events, I am determined (you must pardon me for saying so) that every just debt shall be paid; and your scheme, besides having about it the complexity and incompleteness which always make against success, would absolutely fail in its effect, because I should, at any risk, feel myself bound to make up the sum deducted. The good, therefore, that you and my other friends can do is, to get as much money as possible from different quarters. By keeping it as a private subscription, without the usual machinery of committees, secretaries, &c., &c., it becomes necessary that all who are so kind as to wish well to the cause should exert themselves as much as possible to make it known, and to obtain subscriptions. In spite of the awkwardness and apparent want of delicacy of my writing to different persons, I yet have done so, feeling that the matter, being once taken up, it would be really a pity if it should fall to the ground for want of being made known, which seems to me very likely unless people exert themselves in this plain way. Say, dear friend, at once, Miss Mitford is left almost penniless with debts incurred by the long illness of her father, which at any risk she has resolved to pay. The real kindness is to relieve her from these encumbrances, which may be done by a small individual sacrifice. Forgive me, my very kind friend, for making this representation to you. But you

are one of those who can afford to hear the truth, and who will comprehend that the way to serve a friend is to co-operate with her plans. In a few days I shall, I suppose, know what the debts will amount to, but that has nothing to do with the question, which is to raise as much money as may be, with a view to discharge them—*that* is the first point—leaving me to supply the deficiency. I earnestly hope that your little grandchild will improve in health, and that your present anxiety will soon be happily removed.

From Mr. BLANDY.

High Grove, Reading,
January 23rd, 1843.

DEAR SIR,

You must have thought me very inattentive or dilatory in replying to your kind letter; but the fact is I have been in communication with Miss Mitford, and she with her other friends; and she can scarcely make up her mind as to the best plan to be adopted to further the benevolent views first so considerately suggested by you, with a due regard to her own feelings and to the respect she entertains for the opinions of her friends. In a note I received from her this morning, she says, "I wish much to see you, in consequence of a very satisfactory conference I have had with Mr. Walter, but cannot do so till after Tuesday." I have written to say that I shall be from home on Wednesday, but be glad to see her on the following day, when I hope she will be

able to arrange her plans, that I may have the pleasure of communicating them to you; and should it suit your convenience to come to Reading, be assured it will afford me sincere pleasure to see you at my house.

Your faithful servant,

J. J. BLANDY.

From MISS MITFORD.

January 24th, 1843.

Since Mr. Blandy wrote to you—that is to say, to-day—I have received a letter from Mr. Kenyon, communicating his and Mr. Harness's opinion that the subscription should be *public**—as I always said and desired—and happening to have an appointment with Mr. Walter, I drove to Bear Wood, and found the reasonings of Mr. Kenyon such as completely converted him; so that I have no doubt but Mr. Blandy will give way to the united wishes of three persons of so much judgment and experience, and that *so* the matter will be settled. I took a short statement which I had drawn up (not, of course, in my own name), which Mr. Walter highly approves, and which he undertakes to get inserted in the "Times" and "Morning Chronicle," as soon as we have obtained the permission of some of the most respectable persons in the county to add their names as receiving subscriptions. We shall have no committee, but a list of well-known names will give authority to the statement. Will you allow me, my

* *Vide* page 188.—EDITOR.

dear friend, to add yours—to whom I shall always look, whatever be the result—as the friend with whom it originated? The plan of a memorial to Sir Robert Peel—or rather to Mr. Palmer to petition Sir Robert—is put aside for the moment as likely to interfere with the other. There is no danger whatever of our failing to get this memorial signed by the county magistrates as soon as they can be collected together—it being a thing that will cost them no money and but little trouble.

I hope you approve the plan of making the subscription public. I do most heartily; and it is something to be saved the tremendous awkwardness of conducting the affair entirely by myself, as I should have had to do. Even now I am really overwhelmed with letter-writing and running about after one and another, having nobody even to fold or seal a letter. Still I am inexpressibly thankful for a plan which affords a prospect of something like comfort and repose for my old age after a life of anxiety and struggle; and this I cannot too often repeat I owe to you. I trust that you are all in improved health.

APPEAL TO THE PUBLIC.

To all who take an interest in their fate it has been well known that, for a very long time, the late Dr. Mitford owed his chief support to the literary exertions of his daughter. During the last four years those exertions were but too frequently interrupted by the demands which his failing eyesight and declining health made upon her services, as reader and nurse; and when he died at the advanced age of eighty-two, after a most protracted and

expensive illness, it could hardly be deemed surprising that debts of between eight and nine hundred pounds should have accumulated; the rather that the failure of a publisher within that period had occasioned a loss to nearly half that amount; so that, after the incessant labour of five-and-twenty years, after relinquishing her late mother's large fortune, and three legacies left exclusively to herself, Miss Mitford is unhappily overwhelmed by embarrassments, which she had no power to prevent, which her father has left no means to defray, and to discharge which the small pension of a hundred a-year that she owes to Her Majesty's bounty, is manifestly inadequate.

She was, however, preparing to meet as best she might, at whatever sacrifice and by whatever exertions, this heavy responsibility, when some friends to whom the circumstances became known proposed a Public Subscription, for the purpose of paying debts incurred, not through extravagance and wantonness, but to supply the wants of age and infirmity, and to surround with needful comforts the dying bed of a beloved parent. In furtherance of this design, the co-operation of those to whom the memory of the father is endeared by old and pleasant associations, as well as of those who may take an interest in the character or the writings of the daughter, is earnestly solicited. That which would fall with a crushing weight upon one solitary and almost destitute woman, will be but little felt when divided among the affluent and the many.

The following Noblemen and Gentlemen have kindly consented to receive Subscriptions.

THE EARL OF RADNOR.
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ROBERT PALMER, Esq., M.P.
PHILIP PUSEY, Esq., M.P.
LORD BARRINGTON, M.P.
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C. Stephens, Esq.
Mr. Serjeant Talfourd.
John Walter, Esq., M.P.
Rev. S. W. Yates.

Reading, February 8th, 1843.

(About) Dec. 1843.

I thank you heartily, my ever kind and dear friend, for your offers of books, and rejoice to hear that you have a copy of "Otto." Have you also "Inez de Castro," another unacted play of mine? Some day or other I shall collect and publish the whole of my plays and poems — indeed it only wants my being in town to set about it. As to my "Readings,"* dear friend, I don't know that at present I am in want of anybody but Frere. His "Whistlecraft," or even his Translations from Aristophanes (although I believe I could get them in "Blackwood"), I should be thankful for. My object is not to collect curious or scarce books, but such as must be popular, and are somehow dropt out of notice. The "Pleader's Guide," which I owe to dear Miss Susan Hughes, is a complete illustration of this; so is Catherine Fanshawe, whose poems, only printed in a charity book published by subscription, and edited

* The "Recollections of the Literary Life," first published, as is elsewhere mentioned, in "The Lady's Companion."

by Joanna Baillie, are as good as MS. I will send you my list, by which you will see that, except a few of the old lyrics, which I could not help putting in, owing to my own love for them, I have kept pretty closely to this rule, which will give a different tone to my collection from all others. It will really be the prettiest book that ever was, in virtue of these selections.

ARTICLES DONE.

Percy's "Reliques;" Beaumont and Fletcher—"Lyrics;" "The Pleader's Guide;" Thomas Noel; Gerald Griffin; Andrew Marvell; Thomas Davis; Motherwell; Herrick and Wither (by-the-way, have you Wither?); Ben Jonson—"Lyrics;" Cowley—Translation from "Anacreon;" Longfellow; W. R. Spencer; "Upton Court," with a ballad; Joanna Baillie; Mrs. Browning; "Fishing Songs;" Miss Blamire; Mrs. James Gray; John Clare; Whittier and Halleck; Mrs. Acton Tindal; Mrs. Clive; Miss Day; Catherine Fanshawe.

ARTICLES TO DO.

Praed; Frere; "Spanish Ballads;" John Kenyon; John Hughes; Peter Pindar; Colman; Jekyll (have you any of Jekyll?); "Lovelace;" "Marquis of Montrose;" perhaps the "Fudge Family;' and some of Barham.

I also have heard of a very scarce translation by Macaulay that I should like. Oh! and I mean to give an article to Landor, and Leigh Hunt's "Translations." I have the "Bath Guide" myself, but I agree with you as to its comparative want

of merit—although, if I make another volume (and I am afraid that I have already more than enough for one), I might put it in, because I could append it to a picture of Bath *now*, and a curious contrast of manners. Oh! by-the-way, I want the "Rolliad." I have it myself; but in my immense confusion of books (I believe that I have above six thousand scattered all over the house and overfilling one room) I cannot find it. I mean to rearrange the "Comic Poets," and give extracts from the "New Foundling Hospital for Wit" (six vols.), the "Rolliad," and "Probationary Odes," the thick quarto of the "Westminster Election," the thin quarto of "Poetry of the Anti-Jacobins," and nine vols. of "Spirit of the Public Journals," in one or two articles. They would be racy. I have all the materials except the "Rolliad," which I ought to have, but cannot find.

I assure you, dear Mr. Martin, I am as unwilling as can be to leave my old cottage, but it is crumbling about my ears. However, there are difficulties about the Swallowfield cottage (of which, by-the-way, the distance from Reading and from railways is the great recommendation), and I am partly hoping for one on the top of a hill about a mile and a half off, which the owner is building for himself; but, as he never did and never will stay three months in any place, I have a good chance of coming into the reversion. At all events, I mean to stay here for the next year, taking the chance that this cottage may *then* be repaired, or that I may be able to obtain one of the others; and neither of them have room for my infinity of books,

but that I can't help. How sorry I am for dear Mrs. W——. But she has, I think, about her the faculty of recovery, the sort of strength that rallies after illness. Remember me to her and to all your people; and once again accept the truest thanks of your grateful and affectionate friend.

Since this portion of Miss Mitford's letters was prepared for publication, the friend to whom they were addressed, and whose active regard for her did both of them honour, has passed to his rest at a very advanced age. A word or two may, therefore, be added to the notes already given. The life of Mr. Albinus Martin was a busy and anxious one. I had heard of him, of course, as connected with theatres and dramatic authors,—but not till he entrusted the above correspondence to me, did I become aware that he had, during a considerable period, exercised administrative functions, under circumstances of greater difficulty and responsibility—the formation of the first long line of railway laid down in England, the one between Liverpool and Birmingham. The manager of this was my own lamented brother, John Rutter Chorley—and I may one day tell the details of his share in this enterprise, as evidencing an amount of energy, persistence, and promptitude under difficulties, which should not be lost, as an example, on those who are called on to perform important duties.—The pressure of those in question can only be conceived by those who recollect the amount of creation and experiment implied in undertakings so vast in scale, and so

largely without any precedent for their due guidance. —To specify only one among many points. The large staff of working officials, to whose care life and property were of necessity confided, had virtually to be created. It was insufficiently understood, that the engagement of such recruits from domestic service, or commerce, as were sufficient for less onerous duties, was almost culpably perilous. That the resolution of my brother to allow no infraction of discipline, that the temporary aversion and resistance it inspired during several years, resulted in the destruction of his health, at an early age, is within the truth.—That his admirable qualities were recognised and valued as time went on, shall be more fully set forth, I repeat, on a future day.—It was a strange, sad pleasure (I hope the personality may be forgiven), unexpectedly to meet with a notice of this portion of his life and high and honourable services, as I did in the communications with which I was favoured by the late Mr. Albinus Martin.

H. F. C.

Letters to Rev. Hugh Pearson.

January 14th, 1850.

I thank you most heartily for your kind note, although I assure you I never dreamt of accusing you of unkindness for our previous non-intercourse. I never do commit that mistake, being convinced—whether from vanity or from experience—that nothing is more uncommon than intentional neglect among friends, and I dare to claim you as such. I should have come to inquire after you and Mrs. Charles S—— myself, but that for the last six weeks I have been in great trouble. The man who drives my pony-chaise and takes care of my garden, a very steady and valuable servant, fell ill about that time with confluent small-pox. A little boy of six years, the child of an old and very favourite maid of mine, had been sent home to us from his Reading school the week before, because the same disease had broken out next door. Both had been vaccinated, but first the man and then the boy had the disorder most heavily, and we could get no nurse for love or money. My own maid, a perfect Sister of Charity in all cases of sickness, has been half dead with anxiety and fatigue, and I do not know that we are free yet; for we have still in the house a girl of seventeen who, although she has been twice vaccinated, does not

"seem to me the more safe for that. Round here we have had about thirty severe cases, four of them fatal; and in Reading it has been raging like a pestilence. My maid had had small-pox in the natural way, and I after the old fashion by inoculation; but I find all people much afraid, and have let nobody in since our affliction began—at least, none that came without due warning.

I was sure that you would like Mr. Chambers. There was no love lost: I had a most pleasant note from him, thanking me for introducing you to each other. I verily believe that he is all that he seems; kind, truthful, benevolent, and intelligent, and eminently practical.—No! I have never seen Alfred Tennyson. Thank you for your account of him. An intimate friend of himself and his family (Miss R——, a friend of Mrs. A——) speaks of him just as you do. She says that they are all simple-hearted and simple-minded, full of taste and cultivation, and, above all, singularly unworldly, looking to the qualities of those with whom they come in contact, and not to fortune, or station, or reputation. One cannot speak better of anybody than this. That song is delicious. I hope I am not wrong in keeping your copy, which shall not be shown until you give leave. The Ode I left is for you. Have you read "Shirley?" I thought "Jane Eyre" overrated, but am charmed with this work, which, in spite of many faults, seems to me a most racy, poignant, pungent book.

April 21st, 1852.

I said I would find the missing letter, and I did—rather sooner than I expected, and of course when hunting for something else. They all laugh at my enthusiasm, and they are welcome to do so. What else could keep glowing in me, poor old cripple that I am, left alone in the world after a life of wear and tear, all that forms the solace and the delight of my existence—the love of nature and the love of poetry, the power of cultivating new friendships as well as old ones, and of enjoying to my heart's core such an hour as I spent yesterday? The amusing part of this is, that she who pretends to be so calm and cool an observer is just as enthusiastic as I who make no such vain pretence—only that dear friend of mine is more carried away by authorship, by mere pen and ink—and yet this last account of Madame Sand is a disenchantment if ever there were one. I made sure of your being charmed by Mrs. Browning's letters. I have a great basket full of such, for before Mr. Browning stole her from me we used to write to each other at least twice a week, and by dint of intimacy and frequency of communication could, I think, have found enough matter for a correspondence of twice a day. It was really talk, fireside talk, neither better nor worse, assuming necessarily a form of permanence—gossip daguerreotyped.

I read the other letter to know my Monday's engagement. Ah me! another sitting! I trust this will not interfere with the honour and pleasure I anticipate from Lady Stanley's visit. Few things have given me more pleasure than her kind wish to make acquaintance with me. Besides the post-

humous works of Gibbon, so admirably edited by Lord Sheffield, and the letter which comes at once in such contrast and such harmony with the epigrammatic epistles of the great historian. I had learnt to think of her with no common interest from a much less known work—the "Autobiography" of Hayley, a man who, if somewhat overrated, is assuredly far more underrated nowadays by writers infinitely his inferior in accomplishment and largeness of mind.

Here is my young poet come to release you.

April 30th, 1852.

Do you and Lady S—— fix any day that suits you, merely letting me know, without waiting my answer, which is sure to be yes!

I knew you would like those letters;* but if you knew her, and her terrible republicanism, and our fights thereanent, you would understand that she must have the fullest conviction of Louis Napoleon's being better than she says, before she would concede so much. It is the little holding back that is put on for outward form, to make the view from the Champs Elysées accord with that from the Casa Guidi windows. My Mr. Fields (the collector and publisher of De Quincy's works) is in Paris now. I hope to see him soon after the 12th, and have charged him to find out for me all and everything about the Prince President—certainly the most remarkable man since the Emperor, and worth all the authors that ever blotted fair paper. I care nothing for

* From Mrs. Browning.—C.

them, and I am quite astonished at Mrs. Browning's thinking Lamartine worth talking of. What is very extraordinary about her letters is, that while she was writing two or three lines a week to me, quite as well or better than those which you have seen, she was finishing, in the "Athenæum," a series of papers in "The Greek Christian Poets,"—just as bad in point of style,* as stilted and inverted as those charming letters are natural and pure.

Ah, how I wish we were nearer!

P.S.—The portrait is marvellous as a work of art, considering the material poor dear Mr. Lucas had to work upon. It is the expression that is so wonderful-looking, not perhaps as I ever do look, but as by some remote possibility I might be dreamt to look. The mere likeness, which is very striking, will, I suppose, remain in the engraving, but I doubt if anything so evanescent and ideal as that expression can be transferred to the steel.

November 25th, 1852.

A thousand thanks, dear Mr. Pearson, for your most valuable autographs. They will go by this post to Mr. Holloway, and can be easily pasted on the side or bottom of the page.† He and the binder even contrived to insert an American packet, containing sixteen splendid portraits (that of his brother—more

* An opinion diametrically opposite to this will be found in another series of these letters.—C.

† Of an illustrated edition of Miss Mitford's "Recollections."—C.

like David Webster than his own), and view of Washington's head-quarters, now inhabited by Professor Longfellow, and autographs of, I really believe, every American mentioned in my book; and Mr. Fields talked of it as "a few things hastily jumbled together!"

I send you a letter just received from him, and some verses on Daniel Webster, which, because he says nothing of them, and because they are in his manner, I really believe to be his own. They are almost worthy of the subject, which is a very difficult one, because the mention of it suggests thoughts and recollections which are themselves a poem. I shall send you, as soon as I get it back from Lady Russell, the newspaper containing Mr. Everett's speech, and an account of the funeral, so sublime in its simplicity, and a few additional details of his death-bed—that noble end of a noble life. Only think of his being buried in full dress, like Napoleon—drest exactly as when I last saw that magnificent person, which so suited his majestic mind. I have many other fragments by and about him, which I shall paste into his speeches. Would you like to read them? They are quite at your service. Also, I send some stanzas, not nearly so good, on our great General—keep them, if you please, for I have many copies. Your account of the ceremony is by far the most graphic and striking that I have seen. To feel such a scene as that properly, people must bring to it more imagination and more sensibility than is common amongst gentlefolks. As always happens at a great tragedy, the common people seem to have been most and best impressed.

It was the admirable conduct of those great masses that formed the real grandeur of the spectacle. The penalty of cold catching seems to have been universal, and you will not mend yours by walking about all day (as I know you do) among your poor parishioners in their damp cottages. I was so sorry to think of your beautiful Sonning half under water. We are better off here: this house stands much higher than it seems to do. My good neighbour, Farmer Cope, has had my lane scraped, and every afternoon I have walked dryshod twice to the bridge and back—I mean Kingsbridge, at the back of the house, making altogether a mile and a half—a feat I never thought to accomplish again, and for which I am most thankful. Even the clear Loddon, although very often it has turned its lovely water meadows into a lake, has the admirable quality of subsiding as rapidly as it rises, so that it leaves none of the unhealthy exhalations which follow a flood of the Thames.

As soon as your river subsides I must get to see you. I have so much to say—a letter mislaid at this moment from Miss De Quincy—an exquisite little poem on Ireland, by Mr. Bennoch (not published, being a proof of a few stanzas), more like Béranger's in his best qualities than anything I have ever seen in English—and the "Jerusalem," to talk about. I do hope to hear that grand music, and the longer the performance is delayed the better will be my chance; for I am this winter paying the penalty annexed to married servants, and my good little K—— is in no state to travel; and even if I could go to London without her, would not let me.

December 2nd, 1852.

I was in hopes to be able to get to Sonning this week, and reclaim the beautiful verses on the death of Daniel Webster in person, but the weather and other circumstances make me fear that that will be impossible. I write therefore to beg you to return them, that I may send them to Mr. Bennett, whom I expect on Saturday. It is, I believe, the only copy in England, and nobody has seen it except ourselves and dear Mr. Bennoch, to whom, by mutual consent, all my parcels from Mr. Fields are addressed, and who reads letters, pamphlets, &c., before forwarding them to me—a pleasant partnership, which saves our American friend the trouble of writing two letters instead of one (I do the same myself with two correspondents in Ireland). Now, Mr. Bennoch says he has no doubt but that those verses are by Mr. Fields. It is characteristic of both to speak much of the doings of other people, and nothing at all of their own; but I am proud of them, and for them, and cannot resist the desire of showing this poem (happier and truer in my mind than anything that has been written on the Duke's death) to an English poet, who has the happiness of being acquainted with Mr. Fields as well as with his kindred spirit, Mr. Bennoch. Guided by the same feeling I send you these Irish stanzas, which seem to me nearer Béranger than anything that I have ever seen in English verse: the same mastery of diction and of rhythm, the same spirit, the same finish, the same remarkable manner of making the *refrain* seem the inevitable conclusion of every stanza—above all the same clearness. He has just sent me a proof of some

railway rhymes, written between London and Carlisle, even more remarkable for brilliancy, and for using, without abusing, his great power over that glorious instrument, our Anglo-Saxon tongue. I suppose that my personal attachment to him and his sweet wife may have something to do with it; but I cannot help thinking that we shall have a great lyrical poet in Francis Bennoch.

Only think of the new Duke not having yet been able to make up his mind to sign "Wellington!" It seems to me of very good augury. Don't you like *my* Emperor's ways and words? I am so glad that he is to be married to the Princess Vasa—remembering Mr. Boner's description. Are we ever to meet again?

July 31st, 1853.

Never was anything so fortunate in every way as my delightful visit to your house yesterday. A quarter of an hour after we reached home it began to rain hard. How kind it was in you to invite Lady Stanley, and how good of her to come! I can never thank you half enough.

Mr. Hawthorne has not yet reached London. He is to take possession of his post at Liverpool on Monday, and on Wednesday Mr. Bennoch expects him to attend an annual fête at his house at Blackheath. On Saturday (the 6th of August) they propose to come here—Mr. Bennoch, and, I hope his wife—Mr. Hawthorne, and Mr. Ticknor, of whom Mr. Bennoch says "he is really a very pleasant fellow." I shall

write to the Kingsleys to meet them, and I reckon upon you. Pray come. They will arrive about one o'clock and I shall look for you at the same time. Mr. Bennoch says that by then he shall either have arranged with Colburn, or be off with him entirely. He seems a good deal vexed at what has happened in Haydon's life respecting the assistance which he and his partner rendered to the poor artist.

I have a letter to-day from Mrs. Browning. They are gone to the Baths of Lucca. She says that, in Italy, the impression is that the Czar is mad. Did I tell you that Mr. Boner, who lives with half the kings and princes of Germany, wrote to me a few days ago, stating that the same impression was universal there?

August 8th, 1853.

Ah! dearest friend, how we wished for you! Hawthorne did not come. As a personal friend of the President he is staying at Liverpool just at first, to obey his new orders to the Consuls (his Consulship is worth nearly 5,000*l.* a year), so he will not be in London till the end of the month. *Then* he will certainly come here, and you *must* meet him. The Kingsleys will, but Mr. Ticknor will not, and he is charming—quite worthy of Mrs. Fields, whom, indeed, he joined, and of that cousin who has always been quoted as the most cultivated and elegant American that ever left the States.—Haydon's Life has so completely stopped the sale of Moore's, that there is little doubt but Longman's people are in great regret for not

having postponed the stronger work. Mr. Ticknor consoled me much by reading to the fortieth page of "Uncle Tom," and then shutting the book for ever, as I did at the hundredth.—A bad account of ——, with an atrocious squint, which he cannot help, and an incredible quantity of dirt upon his hands and face, which he can; ungracious, discontented, and conceited beyond measure.—Mr. Tupper pointed out a beautiful passage from his works, when he had him to spend a day at Albury.—"If I had known you liked it," replied the poet, "I would have omitted it in the second edition." He actually did that with certain passages praised by persons of taste and influence—cut out the approved lines, and left the sentence before and the sentence after to join themselves together how they could. He must be a little mad, I think.

November 27th, 183[illegible].

I am so glad that you and Mr. Kingsley have foregathered—I always felt how much you would like each other. He is all that you say, and she is a sweet person. I shall be delighted to know Mrs. Erskine. Next summer, if it please God that I live so long, will, I think, be different from the two last. The autumn is so—more like the old weather, when we had warm summers. At present the cold affects me very much, not only in the limbs, but in the nerves of the back, that is to say, the nerves which run from the spine round the body; so that by Mr. May's orders I do not go into the lower rooms;

getting out in the pony-chaise for an hour or two on fine days, and then returning to my own room where the fire is kept in day and night. You won't mind this. Mr. May promises that a warm summer will do me *real* good. Yes, of all love, let me see your brother's book. My friend, Miss Shee, speaks of him in such terms—she was the sister of my friend Mrs. Robert Dering, whom I never saw, but who must have been a charming woman. I inserted a delicious little poem of hers in my "Recollections"—the gem of her book—and afterwards we had much correspondence, and now her sister keeps up the intercourse, Mrs. Dering being dead. How many persons I have loved and lost without any personal acquaintance! Be sure and bring me your brother's book. I know how life may be put into an apparently dry subject by the mind and the earnestness of the writer. You will find an instance of this if you read the evidence of my friend, Mr. Bennoch, on the London Corporation, that part of the evidence which is contained in Wednesday's "Times." The life that he has put into those figures is something wonderful. He says in a letter to me "that he was ashamed of belonging to such a rotten old hulk, so he has gone out from among them and scuttled the ship," and so I suppose he has. You would be charmed with him—his geniality, his power—the union of rapidity and weight; when he wants to demolish anything the words fly like a cannon ball. He did nearly the same thing this year at the scientific meeting at Hull. He was visiting at some great house in the neighbourhood, and was asked to read a paper on Currency and Banking. He could

not prepare it in a house full of company, so he rode quietly off to an hotel, shut himself up from six in the evening to seven the next morning, and produced a paper quite as striking and as clever as the Corporation Evidence. Two or three of the London papers printed it *in extenso*, and several hundreds of thousands of copies were struck off for cheap diffusion. He is a very extraordinary man. You always tell me what to read. I will get "Christie Johnstone" as soon as *I* can. Dear Lady Stanley now rejoices in her immunity from the pains and penalties of age. Say everything for me to her.—Have you seen or heard a little dialogue between the Emperor and the Empress? I believe it to be true, and don't know that it has been published. She is very impulsive and very heady, and can't help speaking to people with more warmth and cordiality than he thinks quite beseems the imperial state. One day she had been nodding and kissing her hand to somebody out of the carriage-window close by home, and he, after handing her out, threw his arm round her waist and led her to a looking-glass; "*Il reflechit*," said he; "which is more than you do." "*Il est poli*," replied she; "which is more than you are." There is something very pretty in this. Benedict and Beatrice might have quarrelled after such a fashion, or Millamant and Mirabel. I send the preface—the intolerable odour of creosote it owes to poor Miss S——'s toothache. It has travelled to London since, and been suspended out of window, but the smell won't go.

Post-mark, January 26th, 1854.

Before receiving your most kind and charming letter, dear Mr. Pearson, I had been relieved of my anxiety about your health by a long talk with Mr S——, who came to me with Lady Russell, and had seen you only a day or two before. It is a great thing that you should have escaped illness this winter, you, who never spare yourself.

Mrs. E—— and her daughters have been here three times—twice I was too ill to see them—when we did meet Lady Russell was here, and they only stayed ten minutes, so I know only their kind feeling. But it is he that is so clever and so agreeable, is it not? and he promises to come in warm weather.

I am in great trouble—they want more copy—and writing is just now an exertion that nobody would believe. Come, dear friend, and comfort me if you can—and let me know when—I shall be sure to be better for seeing you.

I have only read parts of "My Novel" in "Blackwood."—Miss Goldsmid said of it, "that the writer's mind was not clean,"—meaning, I apprehend, though she stopped then, that there was a pretension to moral purpose without the purity essential for carrying it out. I think that your criticism and hers would not be very different. But very often in his most ambitious books, the people are quite unreal—in "Rienzi," for instance—and "Harold," and "The Last of the Barons." His most artistic work always seemed to me to be "Ernest Maltravers" and "Alice;" where the people, abundantly disagreeable, are yet true and life-like. I have been reading the Waverley Novels since I have been so ill. How

infinitely Scott's worst books excel the best of this present race of novelists! I do not mean the very last—but such works as the "Redgauntlet" and "St. Ronan's Well," where there is always something to admire and somebody to love.

Yes, I like Matthew Arnold—especially his Preface.

Post-mark, February 20th, 1854.

Can you tell me, and as soon as possible, for I am very near the proof in question, what plays Porson edited? This seems an odd question, but one of my people in "Atherton," (a very capital old Parson), is himself editing a play by Euripides. I had made it the "Hecuba," and I now find to my great annoyance that Porson did edit that. So my Grecian being a Cambridge man, and an adorer of Porson, I must of course change the tragedy. I suspect that he also edited the "Orestes," and the "Alcestis," and the "Hercules." Did he meddle with the Iphigenia in "Aulis," or the "Medea?" My date is about 1818 or '19. Just send me word what plays were open ground at that period, not that my Dr. Glenham would have minded breaking a lance with anybody, except the great professor who had just passed away.

I get weaker and weaker, and worse and worse every day. I am obliged to have my ink-glass held for me, and some days even cannot write a note. It was well I finished that work when I did, for I have never had a day in which I could have done any part of it since.

You see how I rely upon you by my giving you this trouble.

I earnestly trust that you continue well. Poor Lady Russell is in great trouble, Sir Charles being ordered back to his old battalion for this expedition.

February 24th, 1854.

The Troads—is that right, dear friend? or Troades? —I have only a French Euripides, and of course do not wish to be wrong. The word "yes" will do, or the right word very plainly written if mine be wrong. I have not made my editor an enthusiast for Euripides after our fashion—I doubt if they be not. For many years I passed one-third of my time in the intimate companionship of Porson's step-daughter, in the same house, that of her uncle, Mr. Perry. She was a very charming person, very fond of the Professor, scamp as he was; but I always retained the conviction that he cared little for the pathos which you love so well, or the vivid little bits of truth and nature unmatched—so far as I can see, even in Shakespeare—what he delighted in was his own new readings.

Poor Lady Russell just came back from taking leave of Sir Charles, interrupted me here, and has staid till after post-time. Never does anything seem to have equalled the blunders and confusion of that departure—like everything that this ministry does. Luckily, our allies are better ordered.

I am more and more powerless, more and more full of pain. It takes from three quarters of an hour to

a whole hour to get me sitting up on the side of the bed. I cannot even put on a dressing-gown, but am merely wrapped in shawls and cloaks; and some days the position of writing is so painful that I can hardly correct the proofs. I only see two or three people; but it will do me unspeakable good to see *you*. Remember that.

Don't expect much from this poor book. It is remarkable only as being healthy and cheerful, considering the wretched circumstances under which it was written. I suppose both works will appear the end of next month, or the beginning of April.

Post-mark, April 2nd, 1854.

Am I to hope to see you soon, dear friend?—and have you read "Atherton?" You will know how very kindly it has been received. Out of a score of notices which I have seen, it is characteristic that the only cold one was by one whom we know.* Ah

* The review of "Atherton"—the tale which had been in prospect and progress for some quarter of a century—here referred to, appeared in the "Athenæum," and was written by me.—I could but say what I thought. On reading the story again—after many years' absence—I still think that it was one of the least worthy productions of a writer, many of whose greater works and shorter sketches are so charming. For a time, Miss Mitford, as will be seen, took the review much to heart.—The plays by me referred to, in the next paragraph, were "The Love Lock,"—written for the company of Mr. Alfred Wigan; and "Duchess Eleanour," produced the week after, at the Haymarket Theatre, with Miss Cushman as its heroine. Regarding the failure of both, there is something to be told, time and place befitting. That of the tragedy was brought about on its second performance—after its having been received with

me! Retribution fell upon him very shortly in two columns and a half of the "Times'" best thunderbolts, which, as he can never expect again such promotion as to have two plays fail in a fortnight (inasmuch as managers will guard against that species of danger), is about the severest vengeance that could befall him.

But I am not satisfied with what critics say, nor with the private letters of friends—I want *your* opinion, the sympathy—and so I write unblushingly to ask for it.

Post-mark, May 18th, 1854.

Your kind and cordial letter, and the hope of seeing you to-morrow, enchanted me. If I wanted a proof of my strong regard for you and my value for your too-indulgent opinion, I should find it in the manner in which I always look to you for sympathy

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favour on the first night—thus reversing the fate which has attended the production of some among the plays which still keep the stage. —I retain the letter, as containing one of the temporary *spirts* of temper,—from which not the most just or generous woman who writes "to the moment," is secure—adverted to by me in an earlier page. Such are so many mere passing clouds—in no respect to be confounded with settled, ungenial weather.—By no friend was I more steadily encouraged in my dramatic attempts than by Miss Mitford; as will be found in the dedicatory note addressed to myself, which was prefixed to her "Literary Recollections;"—and, further, in the printed opinion of my first play, "Old Love and New Fortune,"—produced successfully at the Surrey Theatre—which appeared in the former series of Miss Mitford's letters.—HENRY F. CHORLEY.

and regard; no success complete without your approbation. The genial feeling with which that poor tale has been met, has touched, I hope, a better chord than one authorial vanity. I feel really grateful to the public who greets so kindly a parting effort. You know, of course, how unusual the sale has been. Mr. Mudie told Mr. Hurst this week that the demand was so great that he was compelled to have four hundred copies in circulation, and that was not enough to satisfy his subscribers.

Come, by all means. You will find me in the old room, but *up*, which is something. I have been once into the next room, and we got *this* freshened up, and if the wind gets into a warmer quarter I shall hope to sit at the window and hear the nightingale, and look at Fanchon and K's little girl as they roll upon the turf, and that will be much, even if the vision of getting out of doors be still a castle in the air. However, the next pleasure is seeing you to-morrow, and that is very near, and may be looked forward to with small risk of disappointment.

July 22nd, 1854.

Will you forgive my inconsistency if I beg you to defer the administration of the Sacrament till we have met again? The thought agitates me more than I can express, especially as the time approaches. I am quite sure that it would prevent my getting any rest for at least two nights, and do me more harm, physically, than any one not acquainted with my nervous temperament could possibly imagine.

In great part this is the fault of the body, but it can hardly be the desirable state of mind for the reception of that holy ordinance.

Be sure, dearest friend, that I do not fail in meditation—such as I can give—and prayer. It is my own unworthiness, and want of an entire faith that troubles me.

But I am a good deal revived by sitting at the open window, in this sweet summer air, looking at the green trees, and the blue sky, and thinking of His goodness who made this lovely world; and I doubt if it be even right to give myself so great a shake as I know would be the result of any agitation or emotion.

Let me have one line, and forgive my hesitation. I know what the physical effect of emotion, or even the fear of emotion, is upon me. It was merely the visit of a dear friend, a mere pleasurable excitement, which brought on the struggle for health, and the consequent exhaustion.

July 29th, 1854.

On Monday if you can, please. I am so nervous, that even when expecting so dear a friend, the anticipation takes away sleep for nights and days before. To a certain extent this was always so, and of course it has increased now.

Nevertheless, since that terrible heat went, I have astonished Mr. May by an unexpected amendment of symptoms. He told me the night before last that I was better than he had seen me for a long while.

Of course, dear friend, this is only a question of possible or probable duration. But we are in wiser, kinder hands than our own, as I hope I feel increasingly. I know you pray for me.

I was so glad to be able to send you a copy of those of my poor attempts, of which, at least, the aim was highest. With all books that sell, the publishers are so stingy that it is next to impossible to get one for a friend. I do not expect *here*, at least, the welcome that saluted "Atherton," but I am glad to have put those plays into a collected form. If ever the taste for the English acted drama should revive they will then be there to take their chance, and I cannot help thinking that "Otto" and "Inez" will, some day, tempt the one, a great actor, the other a great actress. I am told that Mr. Phelps, the best tragedian now on the stage, does think of reviving "Rienzi," but there is no certainty.

One of the gleams of light that you talked of came the other day into my sick room;—an exquisite little poem by Mr. Landor; I dare say he will print it in the "Examiner." It is, besides the kindness, a charming summer picture.

August 8th, 1854.

Although the pulse keeps better, and Mr. May speaks most cheerfully, I think myself worse. I can no longer digest the boiled sole or the cauliflower that I used to take; only beef tea and Savoy biscuits, dissolved in champagne and water. I am

still at my open window, but I tell you this because perhaps you may be able to come some day and read to me at all events. I was so sorry not to have asked you to do so last time.

William Harness has been most unexpectedly struck with "Gaston de Blondeville."— The book from which it was taken had no story, so that, except the real ghost, and the first hint of the supernatural pageants, it is really my own. William declares that it made his blood run cold.

October 20th, 1854.

If Mr. Harness should bring Miss S——'s letter back I will enclose it to you. Her opinion seems to be exactly yours, both as to the probability of its being a grant, and the advisability of accepting it. In my answer to her I left the whole matter to Mr. Wellesley, and the more I think of it the more it seems to me that it would be unjustifiable on my part not to accept Her Majesty's bounty, whatever the form under which it may be offered. I do not know whether Mr. Wellesley's mention of the Privy Purse implies a grant, that is to say, neccessarily implies. My certificate, sent every quarter-day, imputes that my 100*l.* a year is "on the Civil List of Pensions." Those are the words, so if you write, dear friend, that is to say if there be any necessity for your writing to the Dean, just tell him how gratefully I feel his goodness, and that I thankfully leave the matter in his kind hands; well aware that just now far more important affairs must occupy the

attention of all at Windsor; and that we will wait patiently the result. Something like this I said to Miss S——, wishing him to know that we did not mean to dun him for his kind offices, or to decline anything which he thought it right to accept. This seems only fair towards the admirable person who has, from pure good feeling, undertaken a mediation always troublesome. Whatever be the result I shall always feel the liveliest gratitude towards him, and towards you, my ever kind friend. As far as money is concerned the grant would be by far more certain than an increase of pension, as you well know, so we will leave all to Providence; and surely throughout this visitation I have experienced mercy upon mercy.

Thank you very much for letting Mrs. S—— know my engagement to-day. Mr. Harness will demand all my strength. He is a most charming person, but requires a great deal from his companion; so does that other most delightful person, Mr. Ruskin. How glad I shall be when he comes again, and you come to meet him. But surely if not on Monday, I shall see you next week, any day except Thursday, shall I not? Your conversation is a spring that never fails, never overflows. You've never tired me mind or body. Be very sure that Mr. Ruskin feels most warmly towards you. I was sure he would. Mr. Bennoch says the commercial crisis in London is tremendous; one half of the great houses would be shaken, but for the gold that has poured in from Australia and America. Three letters arrived at once from Sir Charles Russell. He had just returned from making a reconnaissance of Sevastopol, and says that he "never saw so *nasty* a place"—using the

word in a military sense. Their surgeon had just died of cholera. God bless you, my beloved friend.

November 11th, 1854.

I did write as respectfully as possible to Colonel Phipps, begging him to offer my humble and dutiful thanks—such being, I believe, the proper form—to Her Majesty; merely adding that nothing but the urgent claims of a most severe illness, which had now lasted nearly two years, could alone have induced me to avail myself of the Dean of Windsor's most kind intervention by appealing to Her Majesty's bounty. To the Dean himself I wrote as warmly as I felt; more warmly than I should have done if the pension had been doubled, and not hinting at any disappointment. So far, I hope, is right. My only objection (and that is wrong) would be to have the grant put into the papers as the consequence of "reduced circumstances;" because without the terrible pull of this illness there would have been nothing of the sort—nor ought there to have been—on my part. I transcribe for you Colonel Phipps's letter, by which it almost looks like a private donation, in which case it is very liberal and very kind, and the Queen herself would be desirous of keeping the matter out of the newspapers, in order not to provoke other applications. But the note is not clear, and there is no telling. I have written to William Harness, to beg him to keep the matter quiet if he can. He certainly knows Lord John, but whether with any intimacy I cannot tell. At all events, I am

very thankful for what has been done, and must abide by the rather fatalist motto of my mother's family, "Che sara, sara,"—no bad philosophy when we cannot help ourselves. I think Mr. Byrne a very fine fellow, and very likely to have been a distinguished man. There is an independence which smacks of *power*. All prosperity to your reading-room.—What an acquisition Sam would be at the first starting. He and I often ask questions of what the one is ignorant of, and he is far more frequently able to answer me than I to answer him. I speak of "Times" reading. Thank you for telling me about Dr. Acland.

Swallowfield, November 13th, 1854.

I have a letter from Mr. Bennoch, who is coming here on Saturday. He will arrive by the train that reaches Reading at 3.30, and will bring you and take you back. Now do, I beseech you, come. He has not *yet* the reputation of John Ruskin, but he is a man of mark, depend on it; a man well worth knowing, and whose conversation you will find very brilliant, and very genial—two things not always keeping company. Moreover, looking to your parish, he is a man to know, for I am quite sure that few persons in England have so much the will and the power to push merit forward—I mean, to open the way to lads of good conduct and good talents—such lads as you must often wish to assist when they leave your school, and to whom a mere gentleman, or even a clergyman, however well disposed, can do little

good, but a great man of business, and in one of these the power and the inclination do not often meet. Do come. I wish it were not on a Saturday, but it is his half holiday, and we cannot alter it. Do pray come. Remember you promised, and I will give you yet another reason. If you do not come I shall get fatigued and excited, and the visit, however delightful, will do me harm. With you to take your part in the dialogue, not only will it be doubly delightful, but it will be as good for my health as it will be gratifying to my taste. I think you will come *now*. I do not speak from guess work of what he does for people—I know what he was to a third *protégé* of Mr. Kingsley's. By-the-way, dear Mr. Bennoch spent an evening last week, in company with Kossuth, and some Hungarian officers well acquainted with the Crimea. They spoke with the highest admiration of the gallantry of the allied troops, but declared that the badness of the generalship was something incredible in the days of strategic knowledge: that there did not appear to be the slightest plan—advantages missed, and risks incurred on every point—that so far as armies were concerned, it was mere rash valour, with no apparent object but that of slaughtering the enemy: that the Russians had the incontestable superiority, and that the result could hardly be doubtful. This may or may not be a right opinion, but Mr. Bennoch said that he had not the slightest doubt of its being the true opinion of the speakers, who were certainly clever men, well acquainted with the spot.

I have had six charming lines from dear John Ruskin, on his way to lecture, written in the best

possible spirits, and promising a long letter of chat to-morrow. I shall take my chance of his lecture being really in the morning, and invite him for Saturday, but it is only a chance. I think, however, that if he can come he will. Mind you must.

From dear Mr. Bennoch's letter, I find there is an article against me in the "Quarterly." I shall not die of *that;* and if anything I have done deserve to live, why that will not die either. It is good to have a little check to all the vanity engendered over the Atlantic, and the too great kindness here. As to the money grant, dearest friend,—it was because I felt that I ought to have had enough, I mean that what I had ought to have been enough,—and it would have been so but for this illness, which makes another servant needful, and almost doubles my expenses, and I cannot part with the pony because of the distance from Reading. Well! there will be more than enough, and I am truly thankful. For you, beloved friend, nobody can ever half pay your services to the parish which is so happy as to possess you. May God bless you in every way!

November 23rd, 1854.

Write to me please, and fix your Saturday. Remember that we are keeping one of the busiest men in England in suspense, and that Saturday is his only half-holiday; and please be quite sure of your being able to keep your promise. It must not be left conditional, for a reason which I will give you when we meet. Never mind about fixing a day for

our more solemn engagement. When I asked you to do so I thought myself declining; but Mr. May was here last night, and his verdict both to K—— and to me was, "Certainly not worse." I was very ill on Sunday, and even on Monday, but under Providence, and thanks to light and very nourishing food, and a great deal of it, I have rallied again. The best proof that Mr. May does not think me worse is, that he has lessened the number of doses of the stimulating medicine, from every five hours, to three times a day.

On one side of me lie the "Feuilletons" with George Sand's "Memoirs;"* on the other, a novel by a young lady, dedicated to myself, and called "Philip Lancaster." Send for it, dear friend, and read it. I confess that my experience of the works in which young ladies do me that honour is such, that the fact gives me a singular prejudice against the book, which is usually bosh. But this is of the highest promise. The authoress, Miss Norris, is a daughter of the gentleman who is at present one of the candidates for Abingdon. You know how seldom classes are represented with truthfulness and impartiality, but this girl is large-hearted, large-minded, Catholic and Christian; so she has given a vivid picture of their conventionalities and their narrow-mindedness, and yet has done justice to their merits. It is so true, that I dare say it will please very few. She has intended, I think, to imitate Mrs. Gaskell: but her capital portrait of a small town has none of the caricature of "Cranford;" and in one part especially, Philip's first day at school, she is much more like a

* Sent to her by H. F. Chorley.

far better writer—Maria Edgeworth. Remember that I have not finished the first volume; still I think that I may safely say that, in spite of artistic faults —mere sins of inexperience—you will be much struck by its ability and truth. If she live (for I am told that she has injured her health by writing this book) the world will hear of Maria Norris. I was exceedingly pleased with her, personally; she came down one wet day in the early part of last autumn (not this), and then she was a stout young woman, bright and becoming as our Miss Mary, full as it seemed to me of usefulness (being the oldest of many children), cheerfulness, and honesty, with a delightful scorn of every sort of cant.

November 24th, 1854.

I am so sorry, dearest friend, that I worried you by writing yesterday; but Mr. Bennoch's kindness to me is so much that of a son, that you will pardon my desire not to keep him in suspense. I shall write to him by this post, fixing December 9th for our meeting, and most gratefully do I accept your and Mrs. S——'s offer to come here on St. Andrew's Day to administer the Holy Communion. I was most unwilling to defer that sacred and comfortable rite until illness should prostrate me mind and body. At present I am clear enough mentally, and not too weak physically, to give my whole faculties to the blessed office—doubly blessed when administered by you. I had a most kind note from Mrs. S——, informing me of its being her birthday,

which adds the interest of an anniversary to its other associations, and will keep me in the memory of a family of very old and kind friends. I write to her also by this post. But if you are suffering, dear friend, you must not run any risk for that, because, by God's blessing, I may still hope for some prolongation of existence; at least, so I augur from Mr. May's manner, and the change of the medicine. It is only the Saturday the 9th engagement which is peremptory, because Mr. Bennoch cannot come on any other day, and I so want you to know each other.

To-day brought me a most delightful note from dear Mr. Ruskin. He is suffering from an obstinate cold and affection of the throat. You shall see all his letters: they are charming.

I cannot think from whom I long ago gathered my notion of the good Archbishop: somebody who knew him, for it corresponds exactly with your account. Those are the men for high places. I have always thought the working clergy contained many of the best and most cultivated men in the kingdom; but to keep the church in the affections of the people, the prelates should, as a body, resemble him who is at their head. This book of Maria Norris's—which is a dissenting novel, full of artistic faults, and not quite so good in the later volumes as in the first—gives a picture, only too true, of High Church and Low Church excesses, not excluding those of the Dissenters: a most honest book, from which all extreme parties might learn much good, if red-hot partisans ever would admit plain, naked, unadorned truth.

This war is sickening. Lady Russell received a telegraphic message at two o'clock on Wednesday, to tell her that her son's name was not in Lord Raglan's fatal list; and yesterday she had a letter, dated the 7th, from Sir Charles himself—partly, I believe, written on the 6th;—a terrible history of the Grenadier Guards. Of three officers, his tent-mates, two were killed and one mortally wounded. Of the battalions a thousand strong when they sailed, only two hundred remained. But, my dear friend, think of those savage Russians. They went about killing the wounded. One officer, a friend of Sir Charles's, was stabbed in three places as he lay on the ground, after being shot in the body. It was a complete butchery. Of course the poor mother has already begun to fear again, although, being now too weak to defend their old front, they will be, I trust, in a less-exposed position. Nothing can exceed the good feeling between the French and English armies.

LETTERS TO MR. BENNOCH.

Dec. 7th, 1851.

I thank you heartily, dear Mr. Bennoch, for your great kindness in forwarding this most delightful packet. I thought it was only the collection of De Quincey, and did not expect the treat of Hawthorne and Longfellow. I have begun the Wonder Book, and am charmed with it. I always love children's books, but this is fit for any age. I am not sure (with the exception of George Sand) that Mr. Hawthorne is not the best living writer of prose fiction. From Mr. M——'s book I can well believe all you say of him, and not wishing Swallowfield other than it is, I do heartily wish it were within a morning call of Blackheath.

I have just made a most interesting acquaintance (one of those acquaintances that will be a friendship —as I hope one other is sure to be) with Mr. Kingsley, who fortunately does come within the range of my pony-carriage, being only eight or nine miles off. He is not only the very clever and vigorous and powerful person that I expected, but full of those qualities which go so well with frankness and manliness—gentleness, softness, and grace.

May 4th, 1852.

I have long thought, my dear Mr. Bennoch, that any life was more favourable to poetry than the wretched drudgery that is called a life of literature; and if I had ever doubted that truth, the paper you have sent me to-day—the contrast between the fine, flowing, melodious May-day carol, full of life, and richness, and vigour, of the healthy, cheerful man of business, writing when the impulse seizes him; as the oak springs into leaf when the sun shines, and the sap rises—contrasted with the task-work of the exhausted man of letters; would have settled the point at once.

That you are a real poet is certain. Strike out two or three redundant stanzas towards the end of that fine chaunt, and which rather weaken the general effect, and I doubt if that most inspiring of subjects have produced a finer lyric.

* * * *

By good fortune, this May-day kept the promise of its name. I drove to the Silchester woods—through such lanes! and listening to such nightingales! I wish you had been there, although I had the great trial of finding myself so lame, as to be unable to cross a ploughed field that intervened between me and the most beautiful copse—terrace above terrace—that I have ever seen.

However, I saw the common, all golden with the blossomed furze, and the amphitheatre of wood all around me, and came home by the side of the old Roman walls, and heartily wish you had been there too. You would have found the scenery bearing out your own inspiration; and every here and there,

along the course of the river, and by the side—little springs that gush forth in lanes—beds of fritillarias and of the delicate wood-sorrel, redeem the general barrenness of this ungenial year, when primroses have disappeared from the coppices, violets from the hedgerows, and even our most national flower, the cowslip, from the pastures and meadows. You are yourself so large-minded and liberal, and take so generous a pleasure in making your friends appreciate each other, that you will impute to better feelings than vanity my sending you the enclosed verses. To say truth, one gets so accustomed to receive all sorts of rhymes addressed to one's-self—some lines, in these days of lax versification, not rhyming—that one rather dreads reading lines in one's own praise. But these seem to me to have a certain freshness and truth of feeling about them, which I think you will like in spite of the mistake in the subject. The writer is a very young and pretty girl, almost self educated, to whom I have lent books, and whom I like personally very much indeed. She is just going to India, not certainly on a matrimonial speculation, but to join an uncle and aunt who have adopted her on the death of her father.

Is the name of your "Lady Place" artist a secret? Of course it must be some painter of torchlights. Rembrandt would have liked the subject, and it will be a novelty in English art, combining as it may, interesting portraits, picturesque costume, and one of the most striking historical courts on record. As far as I remember the crypt—although rather lower, of course, than one wishes—is well adapted to the

scene. I think it must be, because I remember it was upon the spot that I was struck with its fitness for a great work of art.

Pray forgive this blundering letter. I could not help writing, for that poem of yours is one that one must needs talk about. But this rheumatism affects my health very painfully in a thousand ways, and my deplorable helplessness and feebleness are beginning to tell upon my spirits. However, I have still the best comforts of life—books and friendships—and I trust never to lose my relish for either.

September 28th, 1852.

Thank you a thousand times, my dear friend, for "Napoleon le Petit." If I had doubted before of the necessity of the *coup d'état* or of Louis Napoleon's popularity in France, this eloquent tirade of Victor Hugo would have convinced me of both. It's as good for that purpose as an abusive "Times" article. I have had this week an interesting letter about him from Germany, which I will show you on Saturday; for so far am I now anticipating that that dear ruler of yours will not put her veto on your visit, that I fully hope she will come herself. I shall be delighted to see her, and to make her known to my fair and dear neighbours. Miss Russell is no common girl; there was no love lost between you and her mother.

Give my compliments to Dr. Mackay, and tell him how very glad I shall be to see him. He will accept my homely cottage fare as kindly as you do, by way

of variety. I cannot read his poems without being sure that he likes the country.

I have letters to-day from Mrs. Clive and Mrs. Acton, respecting the autographs. The latter is a charming person, and offers to get autographs and probably prints of Mr. Barnard and Archdeacon Wrangham, and a drawing, if not a print, of herself —(she is so pretty !). I do hope to get good store of these materials for the book which Mr. Dillon has so kindly distinguished. It will be in common honour to be handed down in such a collection and by such a man.

Adieu, dear Mr. Bennoch; how kind you are about this stereoscope (is that the right word ?), and about everything—you spoil me.

[The circumstances connected with this book excited in Miss Mitford the most exquisite pleasure. Mr. Dillon, whose collection of Turner's drawings was highly admired, had, many years ago, occupied his leisure hours in illustrating "Childe Harold" in the most elaborate manner. Portraits and autographs of persons named; pictures of places referred to, either as engravings or drawings, specially made, were secured, and placed in harmony with the text, until the single volume, as published by Murray, became eight large volumes of imperial folio, occupying several years, and costing a sum almost fabulous.

Mr. Dillon having asked his wife what she would like as a gift on the next anniversary of their wedding, she suggested that he should illustrate for her

a book she had just been reading with the greatest interest, in the manner he had treated "Childe Harold" for himself. The book was Miss Mitford's "Literary Reminiscences," and Mr. Dillon at once began to collect material. Being on the most intimate terms with him, my aid was asked, and, through me, Miss Mitford's help was requested, and very promptly given. She entered into the interesting and novel scheme with her wonted energy. The result was, that her small volumes grew into six royal quarto volumes, with autographs, likenesses, landscapes, &c., all being superintended and arranged by Mr. Dillon, with the able assistance of his friend, Mr. Holloway, the fine art publisher. Each volume cost about 150*l.*; and I shall never forget the almost child-like rapture with which Miss Mitford turned over the leaves and scrutinized, with the closest critical attention, the illustrations of the first volume, when I took it for her examination. Unhappily, she never saw the finished work; and now, Mrs. Dillon the suggester, Mr. Dillon the illustrator, and Miss Mitford the author, have all gone to their rest.—F. B.]

I have had a most interesting letter from Hugh Pearson about his brother's oratorio; it was a complete ovation in the hall. A Norwich paper, which he sent me, contains a critique exquisitely written, I should think by some poet. You shall see it.

Thank you a thousand times, dearest Mr. Bennoch, for your welcome note and its welcome inclosures. Did our dear friend send you some anonymous

stanzas, headed October 24th? and did he tell you who wrote them? They are very beautiful, full of a deep and true feeling—none of the emotion produced by the death of Daniel Webster appears to have been in the slightest degree theatrical or exaggerated. There is about it a personal character very rare as regards public men. But genius has generally the privilege of exciting love. So it was with Napoleon. By the way, how striking that the great American statesman, like the Emperor, should have been buried in full dress.

Have you sent those Irish stanzas to dear Mr. Fields? If not, do; I have told him of them. I did not mention therein, the more I think of that Irish poem the more I see how like it is to Béranger in his best and most distinctive merits—the healthiness, the truth, the one right word in the one only place; the exquisite rhythm, and the matchless felicity with which every stanza glides into the refrain.

I hope I have not done wrong in sending a written copy of it to two Irish friends—the favourite friends of Maria Edgeworth. I really could not help it.

Dec. 8th, 1852.

Keep the letters by all means. Some day or other, you and Mr. Pearson must meet. Ah! that he were not nine miles off! I shall tell you some circumstances about his family, which will interest you additionally for him; but that must be face to face. How glad I shall be when that happens.

Mr. Starkey is said to be the pleasantest man in Dublin. I myself have never seen him. His sister-in-law, Emily (the only person out of her own family whom Maria Edgeworth educated), is one of my oldest and dearest friends. She played me the trick of sending certain of my letters to him, and he then wrote to me himself; having been in a state of literary widowhood since the death of Maria Edgeworth, he has taken me as a sort of epistolatory second wife. Of course, he is high Tory—as half my friends are; but the first lesson of life is to agree to differ. You yourself do not like my beloved Emperor. But was not that visit to the hospitals the very thing to do? And is not he full of those graceful and gracious movements? Too full to be mere calculation! Yes; do send me a few more slips of those exquisite Irish stanzas. I am as proud of them as if *I* had written them—prouder; because there is the friend to be proud of, too. . . .

* * * * * *

P. S.—Besides being an eminent scholar, Mr. Pearson is, of all the men I have ever known, the one whose taste is finest and truest. That is it which makes his praise so valuable. I have sent him the copy he asked for of the Irish stanzas.

March 23rd, 1853.

I send you the inclosed in case Mr. Ticknor should not have written to you, or should not have mentioned in the same terms the uncertainty of our dear Mr. Fields' arrival next year. Doubtless the

Boston partners are afraid that once in England—here he will stay. For my part, I think they had better let him come, or he'll run away. It's a great compliment to London that these good people all like it so well; but, I believe my dear friend, that Mrs. Bennoch and you have much to do with the matter.

How very excellent your evidence is in the —— affair. How full, how clear, how decided! I wonder whether anything will be done in that matter, or whether it will end—as everything in England seems to me to end—in some miserable compromise. Give me a mild despotism—one clear head—where, instead of talking over *affaires* for twenty years, and writing about them in a hundred newspapers—that which is wanted is accomplished. I have seen lately seven people fresh from Paris, and they say what is done there *at once* for architectural beauty, and the comfort of the working classes, can hardly be believed.

Mr. —— sent me the other day a translation of Lamartine's "Napoleon." The two first lines, meant to be in the same jigging metre, were as unlike as an heroic couplet, and the French Alexandrine —*the two* FIRST *lines!*—I read no more, and fairly told him so. . . .

* * * * * *

Henry Chorley and William Harness are both enthusiastic about that poor preface. I continue to suffer more and more. God bless you, dearest friend.

July 4th, 1856.

I cannot send my card for Madame L—— (which I beg you to give with my very best compliments), without thanking you again and again for your most kind visit. Yesterday was so bad a day with me, that it must have proved a most ungrateful return for your goodness; but you will like to know that that kindness certainly answered one kind purpose of yours, in doing me all the good in the world. I have had a long drive this afternoon, and am much better.

To-day brought me a long and very pleasant letter from Henry Chorley. He is coming here next Sunday. He tells me that "Haydon's Life" is out. Did you know this yesterday? His words are, "It is no wonder that I have been thinking of you much lately over 'Haydon's Life,' which is certainly one of the most interesting books I ever read. But what a man for you all to have written sonnets to, dear friend ——!" So I suppose the editor has failed so to trim and prune the work, as to give our poor friend the best appearance of which it was capable. If you remember, whenever he introduced a portrait of himself into his pictures, he used so to exaggerate the good points as to make them almost deformities. Such, no doubt, is the case in that pen-and-ink moral and mental portrait, called his Autobiography. No doubt we shall be brought to book for these Sonnets. God grant they may not have printed many letters of mine, written with the most unguarded freedom. I am more than curious—really anxious to see the book, of which I have no present chance. As to the Sonnets, we

have sinned in good company. I think that Keats, and Wordsworth, and probably others were guilty of the same sin. I remember poor Haydon told me that Keats greatly praised mine.

I forgot to tell you yesterday, that I seized an opportunity of doing what little good I could to Mr. Bailey ("Festus"), by telling Mr. —— of your visit. . . . . He replied that Mr. Walter was always anxious to be of service to any Nottingham men, and that he would have an excellent opportunity of repeating what I had said because "Festus" had been put into his hands to review (I suppose in the "Times"), and that the review would be very different from what it would have been had we not held this conversation. I cannot think how I forgot to tell you this.

July 21st, 1853.

To-day, dear friend, I had a letter from Mr. Ticknor—a most kind one—to say that they awaited your leisure to come. I know how busy you are, and how great a favour and kindness it is in you to think of coming with them. But I write chiefly to say that Mr. and Mrs. Kingsley are most desirous to see Mr. Hawthorne and you. So that they have arranged to come again, when you come. You will, I know, let me have as much notice as possible on that account. You are sure to like them. The day before will do. I mean my getting the notice on one day, and your coming the next. There will be probably Mr. and Mrs. Kingsley, and a Miss J——,

who is staying with them. I never liked any merely literary man so well in my life as I like Mr. Kingsley, and she is worthy of him.

Thank you a thousand and a thousand times for "Haydon's Life." I read it almost with breathless interest. The most melancholy, painful, fascinating book that I ever took up. I have done with it, and unless you be coming as soon as I hope, tell me if I should send it to you, with a corrected copy of "Rienzi," the tragedies "Julien" and "Foscari," "Sadak and Kalasrade" (the opera), and the Dramatic Scenes—"Charles the First" you have; and the new plays must be printed from the copies left with Colburn. Henry Chorley advised their being printed in the order in which they were written. But I think—and so you seem to think—that we had better begin with "Rienzi." However, of that we will take council together—that is, if you come soon—as I hope. How well Mr. Tom Taylor has done his work. I, for my part, feel heartily obliged to him, and he has set forth plainly all that poor Haydon owed to you.—That —— seems to have been as bad as —— or worse; and what business had he to go to College, when he must have known how matters were with his father!—And then to throw away the 850*l.*, spent upon his College life!—If he had gone into a merchant's office, I should have honoured him, or if he had stuck to engineering. I wonder if he be still in the office where Sir Robert Peel placed him? Of two things I doubt—at least I feel that I should not have had courage to put them in—the prayers and the spite of the letters. I suppose they were necessary to show the character;

but it would (as so much had to be omitted) have been merciful to leave them out. And might not Government have given some professorship, or made one for poor Haydon, to save him from the heart-break of the "Fresco" affair? It is an intensely painful book. I had quite forgotten *that* sonnet. I thought it was a better one printed with the Dramatic Scenes. The person whom Haydon always put me in mind of, was Benvenuto Cellini.

I wonder Mr. Taylor did not hit upon the comparison.

* * * * * *

Wednesday morning.

The above was written last night. After all, if you think dear Mr. Kingsley and his womankind, and Mr. Pearson will shut up Mr. Hawthorne, say so, and I will tell them. They know he is peculiar. Mr. Kingsley wanted to make arrangements for showing Mr. Hawthorne Bramshill some other day, if he wished to see that fine old place outside and in. And he wants to have a talk to you about Alexander Smith. The what-to-do-with-whom seems to be the puzzle of the day.

August 18th, 1853.

You are so clever in every way, that no doubt you could *make* the frame for the chair! At all events, you and Sam can talk it over when I have

the happiness of seeing you again. Sam is objector-general in this house; he never assents to any proposition. If one gives him his choice of half-a-dozen ways of doing a thing, which he himself has declared must be done, he finds fault with them all. I have no doubt but if I took him for my critic, as Molière did his old woman, he would cut away ninety-nine pages out of a hundred, as old Mr. Edgeworth used to do by his daughter, and hum and ha over the one which he suffered to remain. K—— treats his objections with sublime contempt, and takes her own way in spite of them. *She* has a great turn for carpentry, and is never so happy as when walking about the house with a hammer in her hand. If she had but a proper tool-chest, and strength of arm equal to her constructive faculty, I make no doubt but she would set her husband at defiance, and work out your diagram this very day. My own doubt is whether the wooden wheels will bear the weight of the chair and my person upon the gravel walk. Indoors our rooms are so small, that the great difficulty is getting downstairs, where no chair can help us! But the kindness is all the same, dear friends. And have we not had great amusement from the castors already? What would you have more? I quite forgot to notice the horrible under pay of poor Miss H——, and her merit in persisting, against such discouragement, in earning her own living. Nobody seems to keep a companion now—poor relations fill the place. I remember thinking her very pretty and very pleasing. The best remedy for her case would be a good husband! I have mentioned her—not as a wife, but as a companion—to an old schoolfellow

of mine, who once went to Burwood Place with me, and who, with every blessing of life and many good qualities, is the most unhappy person of my acquaintance. She is at Paris just now—one of her misfortunes being a fine country house in Essex, where she never lives a month at a time. I do believe that they would be a blessing to each other. But chiefly because of its fitness, the arrangement is sure not to take place.

Sept. 21st, 1853.

I am so glad, my dear friend, that my preface pleases you. I wish I were as sure of all of it as I am of what concerns yourself; but in the whole, as in that, I tried to be true. All day I have had company. First, dear ——, with some of his own proofs. There is real talent, if he would but do himself justice by correcting and re-correcting. None of these young poets will do that. Then he has been spoilt. He had Woolwich, and would not stay (G. R—— did the same); so then he was sent to Trinity College, Cambridge, for the bar. Well, he fell in love, and would not wait for that—he would go into orders—and now he won't go into orders; and a brother-in-law is desirous of helping him to live by literature, by purchasing some shares in a safe newspaper (I mean commercially safe), where he might work as a sub-editor or a large contributor. He would do this well, having written with high approbation in "Household Words," and being a ready and lively prose writer. I trouble you with

all this detail, because I am sure if you hear of such a thing offering, you will have the goodness to let us know. His brother-in-law has a handsome income, and is willing to make a handsome purchase. He—the brother-in-law—is something like you in liberality. While in the army, before his marriage, he set apart half his income to help brother officers on. A man of rare generosity—and this boy is charming—most charming—one reason why he has been spoilt—large in heart and mind, full of kindness and sweetness, making an atmosphere of love about him. The talent is real. He says that De Quincy wants to come into our neighbourhood. Miss De Quincy (Margaret, from whom I heard the other day) wants to go back to the lakes. She talks of her brother in India, a young physician, of whom I never heard till now. —— says that Mr. De Quincy's conversation is superb. I wish he may come here. Alexander Smith invited —— to Glasgow, but he did not go. Well, at one o'clock came Dr. Dickson, of Hertford Street, May Fair, an old friend of mine, who says that he slightly knows you, and is of the same county. He is a Tory, but a very clever, kind person, and with a wonderful knowledge of books and people. He is at Taplow just now—or rather has been at Taplow with his family—and is just going to London. He has been hunting all over London for a poem on the death, or rather the burial, of Sir Walter Scott, by our friend Charles Swain—a poem where all the personages of the novels and poems appear. I think I remember it. Can you tell him or me where it can be procured? I think dear Mr. Swain will not be sorry to find his verse making so strong an impression on

a very clever man. He had with him a Miss W——, a charming person, a relative, and he talked of Dr. Mackay's "Songs," and of the good they had done, with rapture. He is gathering songs together just now in all languages. We had a very pleasant afternoon; and I wished for you and dear Mrs. Bennoch very much indeed. I must make James Payn known to you. He is truth itself. Also I have had a charming letter from dear Mr. Fields, the burden of whose song is this: "'54 is coming, and so am I!" I enclose a letter for him, if you send any packet to America whilst in the country.

Well, dearest friend, I did read the banking and currency paper, with admiration of its clearness. It got nearer to making me understand the question than anything has ever done yet. What a compliment to print it all! I have lent it to Sir Charles Russell, who is just making his maiden speech in the county as president of the East Berks Agricultural Association. He will do well, because modest, good-natured, cheerful, and heartily desirous to improve.

Sept. 22nd, 1853.

The stanzas are charming, full of sentiments of morality and of beauty. Do as you like about showing them. Charmed I am sure they will be at any time.

Ever since your letter arrived Sam, and K——, and I have been in full chase of poor Haydon's letters. We have discovered sixty-five, some of them very long. I have not read a word of them,

being almost blinded by the search. Perhaps you will look them through, to see that there is nothing which, for his sake or mine, ought not to be printed—although I fully believe that Mr. Taylor (if he is to edit them) might be perfectly trusted. If you have any communication with him, be pleased to say how gratefully I felt the kind manner in which he had mentioned me in the "Life."

My full belief is, that this packet is but a small part of the letters I have received from our poor friend, and that I still possess the rest. But I am nearly blinded in the service, and cannot answer for discovering what remain. My papers are, I grieve to say, in a disorder unparalleled. These have been disinterred from five different trunks and boxes, two great hampers, and a variety of baskets; and the number of drawers stuffed with comparatively recent correspondence I will not venture to reckon up. In moving here, two years ago, this confusion became worse confounded. If it please God that I live to the winter of 1855, perhaps I may try to cleanse this Augean stable. During the coming one I shall not dare to make the attempt, for fear of losing my sight before finishing my story.

Now that you are alone, you must come to see me. I want some comforting; for certainly during the last fortnight I have been much worse in health, suffering from the rheumatism in every limb—even the right arm, hitherto spared—so that I have little left sound now except my heart (if I may say so much) and the head—such as it is. You must come to do me good, and to take back with you these letters, which will be very valuable for the volume or

volumes. I don't suppose he wrote so freely to many people. I wrote a long letter to you yesterday, which I take for granted you have got. . . . I should like to have seen Walton Hall. The best account of the place and the man is by my poor friend Mr. Cissey, through whom Mr. Waterton sent me a most gracious invitation. His books are most racy.

April 5th, 1854.

Will you thank Mr. Dillon warmly from me for his most kind letter, and for the pleasure he proposes giving me in sending the book he has so highly honoured for us to see. It is a double pleasure, since I shall see you the sooner for the commission.

William Harness read "Atherton" at a sitting, and seems to like it as well as you do; but he detests the portrait, which he says represents "a fierce, dark, strong-minded woman," and is neither like me nor the picture.

Henry Chorley, that moment returned from Paris, says that some of the advertisements run so—"Atherton, and other Stories," which is well. He only came back five minutes before post-time, so that he had only read the preface, with which he is much pleased. I am quite sure that in the first twenty pages of the second volume there are above thirty misprints, the consequence of hurrying the book in that way through the press. I shut it up at the end of those twenty pages, and should hardly open it again.

How glad I shall be to see your lyric! I was

quite sure you would agree with me about Mr. ——. I never expect him to write a good line again.

Mr. Boner is a most accomplished man. You will not fail to become friends. He came to me eight or nine years ago from Mr. Wordsworth, and we have been fast friends ever since. He talks of coming to England in the summer. I shall tell him what you say. He passed last autumn in the Tyrol, on a visit to the Prince of Leiningen, half-brother to our Queen.

Dear Lady Russell! I shall tell her what you say. There is no love lost between you. They will be delighted to see the book. Sir Henry, who was a most accomplished man, had begun to illustrate Lord Brougham's "British Statesmen." His library and collections are very fine.

May 3rd, 1854.

I have no words to thank you for all that you have told me, and for all that you abstained from telling. It is the kindness of a son to a sick mother —of strength to weakness—may God bless you for it! Come by all means, I shall be delighted to see you. My best time is, I think, from three to half-past four in bed. Often, indeed, almost always, I do not close my eyes all night, not till about ten or eleven in the morning, from which time till two I get a siesta and am refreshed. So if you arrive here at one, or half-past, K—— will get you a luncheon, and I shall be able afterwards to talk to you for a couple of hours. At night, when up, I am very uncertain;—the terrible operation of being

moved sometimes leaving me in a state from which I do not recover all the evening. To-day I had twice nearly gone down, even with Sam holding me. But then, yesterday, I had the great shock of hearing of Mr. Justice Talfourd's death; an old friend of his and mine having written to tell me of it on Monday.

Two or three weeks ago, at the beginning of the circuit, he (Talfourd) drove over from Reading to see me, and being much affected at the state in which he found me, we fell entirely into the old times and old feelings, and talked heart to heart for an hour and a half, as we used to do during the many years that my father's home was a second home to him.—I rejoice that our last meeting and our last parting were so cordial and so affectionate. We both felt it to be the last, although neither dreamt which strand of the chord would be so soon broken. My present anxiety is about his property. I hope he had insured his life, for I expect that he had saved very little, and there are six children (three sons and two daughters, and an adopted niece), all used to the utmost indulgence. The eldest and youngest son, are with him. The first just called to the Bar, and going the circuit; the last going as his father's marshal. The second son is just about to be ordained, and he spoke with glowing thankfulness of the kindness of my dear friend, William Harness, who is to give him a title, and to take him under his own eye as one of his curates—an inestimable advantage.

I enclose a letter from John Lucas, about the Haydon portrait. How much too good you are about my poor old face. More of that when we

meet, and of Mr. Kingsley, and of Mr. Stoddart, and of Grace Greenwood;* for I have heard from Mr. Stoddart, and seen dear Mr. Kingsley, who values you as you deserve to be valued.

August 6th, 1854.

In the hurry the other day, dear friend, I never mentioned your Glee; it is charming. I get worried every day with letters about books that one does not care to have, and then one must answer and say something that shall be neither outrageously false nor unkind; and people, whose time is of as little value as their books, they write, and—if you do not answer them, they—write again. It never occurs to them that when you stop they had better stop also; and so the better things get passed by. Moreover, the dampness and the cold are making a change for the worse in my rheumatism, more stiffness and more pain.

If one could but teach those young poets to write with your care; if they could but understand that the direction of the tree depends upon the depth of the roots!

* Miss Sarah Clark, afterwards Mrs. Lippincott—a most memorable American "lion," and lion-huntress.—C.

August 23rd, 1854.

* * * * *

"I have had a most affectionate letter from my dearest old friend, Dean Milman, who is now in Cornwall on his autumnal progress—this year to the Land's End, and will not get the books until he returns to St. Paul's; but as Arthur Stanley (one of the props of the "Quarterly") and Hugh Pearson have taken the "Dramatic Works" as their English book into Switzerland, there are good hopes that he may do it. They return the sooner (in three weeks) that my beloved friend may have a chance of seeing me once more—indeed he was most unwilling to go. I wish you had seen Hugh Pearson. He is exactly a younger Dr. Arnold, and has been to me, spiritually, a comfort such as none can conceive—such as none can be who is not full of tenderness and charity. I went to him for advice and consolation, and I found it. I have always felt that this visitation was the great mercy of a most gracious God, to draw me to Himself. May He give me grace not to neglect the opportunity! Pray for me, my dear friends! We are of different forms, but surely of one religion—that which is found between the two covers of the Gospel. I have read the whole twice through during the last few weeks, and it seems to me, speaking merely intellectually, more easy to believe than to disbelieve. But still I am subject to wandering thoughts —fluttering thoughts. I cannot realize even that which I believe. Pray for me, that my faith be quickened and made more steadfast. You will understand how entire is my friendship for you, and my

reliance upon yours, when you read these last few lines.

Mr. Pearson staid over Monday, that he might administer the sacrament to me. Sam and one of my oldest friends, a daughter of Sir Matthew Wood, received it with us, although a nephew of her husband's had died that morning. I go on gradually but steadily declining. I am ordered brandy and water, game soups, game—even if I can take it, turtle soup,—all depends, humanly speaking, upon nourishment.

* * * * *

Sept. 1854.

What you tell me of the Bishop of Lincoln is very pleasing to me. All that I recollect of him, and all that I hear make it delightful to be honoured by the remembrance of such a man. Assuredly I had not forgotten the "Hamlet."—Except John Kemble's, I have never seen a better. And how different they were! The one all art and study—not quite perfect, because not quite hidden—the other the result of natural taste and feeling, and of a youthful grace of mind and person. Another merit it had:—Well as I loved the dear Doctor, and admirable as he was in teaching the Greek drama, his misdoings in English recitation were such as to make me perfectly certain that the excellence of the young Hamlet was in spite of the master-manager. It will give you some notion of the good Doctor's theory of English blank verse, to tell you that he used very seriously

to urge upon me the abandonment of the study of Milton and Shakespeare, and *tutti quanti*, and to apply myself to those writers who excelled in the art of versification, such as Thomson, &c. It was the mechanism of verse only, observe—let me not do injustice to my dear old friend. But fancy what his notions of recitation must have been who could prefer Thomson to Shakespeare, merely as a matter of pause and rhythm! Well, I had, the moment I saw the advancement of the new Bishop, inquired if it were "Hamlet;" and in a very few days a letter from Mr. Justice Talfourd, and the local papers, assured me that my conjecture was right.

No doubt *I* wrote the critique in the "Mercury," such as it was.* Well, no man will be the worse Prelate for being early imbued with the spirit of the personage into whom I verily believe that Shakespeare put the most of his own nature—the wisest and kindliest of his creations.

So you have been to Newstead. To revel there would only be possible to him who quaffed wine out of a skull. Do they still tell the ghost story? Some friends of ours—also friends of Colonel Wildman—borrowed the house, shortly after Lord Byron's death, to keep their honeymoon; and both of them told me that they, one night, felt the ghost pass over the bed; that is to say, that they felt a cold breath pass from side to side, waving the curtains, stirring the

* It is amusing to compare the above with the confession elsewhere to be found in Miss Mitford's Letters, that she had written criticisms of the Greek Plays at the Reading School "against the grain," to oblige Dr. Valpy—and again, with her enthusiastic chapter on the subject in "Belford Regis."—C.

draperies, and diffusing a solemn and strange influence. They lived at our old house for seven years, and we saw them almost daily. I questioned them repeatedly, always receiving the same answers. He was one of the children of a Lord Arran, two or three back, Captain the Hon. Edward Gore—a gay sailor. Of course I do not believe that it was more than fancy, and an effect of the influence of the place. I give you the tale for what it is worth; but it always seemed to me a new form of ghosthood; and they told me that they each felt it at the same moment, and without having heard or thought of the thing until it passed.

Sept. 10th, 1854.

That song is, now, charming, though whether the conclusion will go well to music is more than I can tell. You know, of course, that all musicians, whether composers or singers, complain of Sir Walter, and that even the matchless "County Guy" won't sing. If this be so, the fault will be with me, or, rather, with the first stanza; for I always feel a conviction that your writings are music in themselves; or, rather, the fault will be in the additional line—exquisite as to sense, and essential to the accordance of the two stanzas—and, after all, a musician of any skill ought to manage it. The "Busy Bee" song has been set, I suppose; at least, Mr. Fitzwilliam (son, probably, of the actress who died the other day) wrote to ask permission to do so.

Ah, dearest friend! your sanguine nature misleads

you, when you use the word convalescent. It is simply that, after being for two or three months entirely given over, Mr. May thinks there is a possibility of prolonging life. He would not call me "out of danger." He did not when I asked him. A cold, exhaustion, over-exertion, over-fatigue, two visitors at a time—*one* for too long—any of these things would still carry me off in a few hours. But what is gained is much; and I owe it, under Providence, to Mr. May's skill and care, for even whilst given over, he watched every symptom, and tried every resource of his great art, as anxiously as if his whole fortune had depended on the result of his treatment. Ah! how happy am I in friends! and how mercifully has God dealt with me in this matter! His will be done!

Tell Mrs. Hall, and dear Mrs. Bennoch, how much I feel their kindness.

* * * * * *

But I suppose we shall get something. Ask Mr. Procter what Henry Phillips gave him for the "Vine" and "The Sea."*

* I can answer this question. My dear and valued friend, Barry Cornwall—whose book of Lyrics will last, I believe, as long as English lyrical poetry shall last—published "The Sea," under the pseudonyme of Bethel—in a magazine (I think "Fraser's"), about the year 1828–1830. The lyric was pointed out to the Chevalier Neukomm by an English friend of his; and that cunning poet, and selfish man, desirous of making his way in this country, was wise enough to see that he had hit on a vein of pure gold, worked by one of the most generous human beings who ever adorned literature. After some years, and the appearance of some score of songs, a trifling acknowledgment arrived from the Chevalier Neukomm's publishers, in the shape of a trinket for the poet's wife—I believe that a similar acknowledgment had been earlier made by Mr. Henry Phillips—and that was all!—C.

* * * * * *

God bless you, dear friend! I was all the better for a visit, perfect in being so short!

Oct. 11th, 1854.

Thank you a thousand and a thousand times, dearest Mr. Bennoch, for your great kindness in forwarding the long-expected book. It has not arrived yet; but there is no doubt of its coming before night, and I write at once, because, after Mr. Ruskin's arrival, of course I shall have no time. He spends to-day with me alone; and I have bespoken Mr. Pearson to meet him to-morrow. They are of the same age—were, indeed, at Oxford together—of the same sort as to habits, the same taste, the same refinement—and Mr. Ruskin is prepared to meet him as a blessing. This is a great comfort to me, for the very expectation of this visit has made my pulse low and fluttering; so Mr. Pearson will help me to-morrow.

I am better; but I hold the amendment on the tenure of keeping as quiet as possible, bodily and mentally. Mr. May was here last night—much pleased with certain symptoms which *I* had never even noticed, such as the being able to cross one leg over the other, especially the left—thinking me, in short, decidedly better except the pulse; but you know that is an important exception. I believe it to be entirely the effect of nervousness. His prescrip-

tion for that was brandy—to use K.'s phrase, "anything in the brandy line." So you see who it is that keeps me alive just now.

I have a charming letter, full of feeling and affection, from Mr. Fields. It does one's heart good to know that his silence is the result of some most unaccountable mistake, or accident rather.

* * * * * *

What can have become of those letters and books? This copy seems to have come through Mr. Hawthorne—a fitting medium for kindness and affection. One of my reasons for praying, if it be His will, for a prolongation of life is to know and to thank Mr. Hawthorne. Tell him so if you write to him. I shall write to Mr. Fields the very moment I have rested after my visitors. At present I feel as if I could not speak an unnecessary word, or write an unnecessary line. I have even requested dear Lady Russell not to come. . . . .

Miss Shee writes me, in a letter to-day, that Lord Burghersh thinks all quiet for the present. She has lost a favourite relation in that unhappy 23rd. Some neighbours of ours have a son—only eighteen since the battle—spared to them. He was in that regiment, and they thought him dead, till they received a letter from himself, announcing his safety.

(Last Letter. Miss Mitford died on the 9th .)

Jan. 7th, 1855.

Thanks, dearest Mrs. Bennoch, for all your goodness, past and present. May God long bless you and your dear husband with everything your kind hearts can wish!

There is wonderful vitality in me, and I have rallied to a certain point; but I must write no more notes or letters. They say that exhaustion of the brain, from writing, brought on the retching that alarmed everybody on New Year's Day.

Your dear husband must come and see me—I suppose the 27th, but will let him know if not.

The envelope containing the foregoing was directed by Miss Mitford, but left open, with instructions to Sam, that, should any change take place, he was to carry out her instructions, which she gave with the utmost precision, and desired him to add whatever might be found necessary, which was done thus:

Jan. 11th, 1855.

DEAR SIR,

Our dear mistress is no more. She died last night, at five o'clock, without a struggle. Lady Russell and her eldest daughter were with us; Mr. May had just left. She wished me, the day before,

to give her love to all her friends, and thank them for all their kindnesses.

I remain your obedient servant,

SAMUEL SWEETMAN.

Could you kindly send the enclosed notes; and please, sir, write to Mr. Fields, and tell him Miss Mitford desired me to give her love to all American friends.

Final Words.

My task is closed, so far as the arrangement and editorship of this second series of Miss Mitford's letters are concerned.—Taken conjointly with the first one, which has been so cordially received—it will, I believe, establish their writer in the first rank of those women whose lives have been revealed by their correspondence. Possessing some knowledge of the story of her life, I hold it to have been completely told in the foregoing pages,—one passage excepted, which is too curious and characteristic to be overlooked;—and which I mention because it may possibly be brought into view by those who make capital of the Dead, and who are confident in speaking of matters as facts, in proportion as their real knowledge is small.

No lover of literary anecdote can have forgotten how the "Thralia dulcis" of Dr. Johnson, the patroness of the over-sensitive and not over-grateful Fanny Burney—on being widowed, after her long years of wifehood to Signor Piozzi—at the close of her life, attached herself, sentimentally, to Conway, the handsome actor.—High flown—preposterous as were the tender letters addressed by her to him, it would be more preposterous still to regard them (as some have done) in the light of real *bonâ fide* declarations; and not as a last outbreak of that Della

Cruscanism, which, with women of a certain character, never dies out, till life becomes extinct.—The amount of false construction which such preferences have caused in those who have not cared to study nature and character, is great; but that it is frivolous, superficial, and ungenerous, I have been long convinced. Men have been far too apt to misrepresent the caprices of imagination, among women, as so many caprices of passion—an unjust censure.

Throughout her life, Miss Mitford, as has been stated, was given to overcolour the merits of those whom she chose to adopt and protect. Thus her judgments of her friends, and their talents, were far less shrewd and clear-sighted than those which had relation to matters beyond the range of her personal sympathies and antipathies. Most especially, and most naturally, was this to be seen in her estimation of, and relations with, her friends and comrades in the dramatic world.—She has recorded how earnestly she admired and approved of Mr. Cathcart, who played the part of Cromwell in her "Charles the First," when that tragedy, a favourite work of hers—possibly because of the ambitious difficulty of its subject, after having been bandied about from "pillar to post," after having been refused a licence from the Lord Chamberlain—was at last produced at the unlicensed Victoria Theatre, in July 1834.—Of Mr. Cathcart's devotion to his art, there could be no doubt. I believe that he walked up from Brighton to London, in order to witness the first representation of Mr. Serjeant Talfourd's "Ion." Distinctly

remembering him as I do, it seems to me strange to read "that his acting" in Miss Mitford's "Charles," was "refined, intellectual, powerful, and commanding beyond anything I ever witnessed."—She had seen the Kembles, and Kean, and Young, and Macready. To such magnificent praise, the sequel was not satisfactory. I cannot recollect that Mr. Cathcart appeared in any other character of importance in London. Such prophecies and such sequels, however, have not been rare in the dramatic world. About the same time, or a little later, a successor to Kean was announced at one of the patent theatres, Mr. Denvil, who made a powerful and real effect in Lord Byron's "Manfred." But he was unable to keep up the impression in a second part, or even to wait for the recoil which may come in a third character, after the second one has proved a disappointment; and he passed away accordingly.—There is small real genius in the world —of imaginative creation and personation, at least —when the same is unaccompanied by sustaining power.

Many years subsequent to the appearance of Miss Mitford's "Charles," she imagined that she had found a treasure in a young and handsome actor, whom she encouraged and fostered, and was resolute to produce. It is noticeable that not one of the letters in the former series, or among those before me, adverts to the matter by even naming the person in question. But she was—as always throughout her life, in regard to those she adopted—enthusiastic in his behalf;—and I have reason to think that she sub-

stantially befriended him. He repaid this kindness by giving those, who chose to listen to him, reason to believe that she wished to marry him. The incident is too curious a one to be omitted; but it is an old tale of Woman's kindness, requited by a vain and selfish man's indelicate ingratitude. I have never known any woman, to whom such ridiculous silliness, to call it by no stronger name, would have been more impossible, than Miss Mitford. Her letters, already published, have shown how she resented all gossip of the kind, as only fit for persons of inferior cultivation and manners,—for the Abigail's room, and the milliner's workshop; but not for the summer parlour of an English gentlewoman.

It will have been seen, in one of the series of letters published here, with what earnestness, sincerity, and constancy Miss Mitford watched over and counselled younger aspirants for literary distinction; how averse she was to everything like prodigy-work; how sedulous in recommending care and honest study to all attempting literature; how sincere in discouraging everything like empiricism; how judicious in discerning where lay the native strength and originality of those she befriended. Her correspondence with the late Charles Boner, signally attests this. It was clear to her that this amiable and accomplished man stood in need of being braced; and nothing can be more charming or worthier (to use the word in its grammatical sense), than the persistence with which she followed up her counsel, at the risk of being distasteful to its object. A

recent number of Chambers's Journal,* illustrates this merit of hers yet more forcibly; for her correspondent, Mr. James Payn, it is evident, was naturally endowed with more power and wilfulness than the translator of Andersen's "Fairy Tales," and the author of "Chamois Hunting in Bavaria." It is to be regretted that these letters have been imbedded in separate publications;—perhaps to be extracted thence, on some future day, when a complete series of the correspondence, with selection and condensation, may come to be placed on our library shelves. But, in reading these letters to young authors, I have been struck by a tone of counsel, which however largely accredited by persons of greater genius than Miss Mitford—even by Sir Walter Scott himself—has always seemed to me fallacious, derogatory to the dignity of letters, and savouring of worldliness. Those who hold that Genius has laws of its own—absolving its possessor from such duties or responsibilities as tie the mediocre, are false and noxious in their doctrine. The preaching of this convenient faith has caused a larger amount of moral failure, extravagance, and wretched despair, bred of disappointment, than can be summed up.—But I think that those who insist on putting Pegasus in harness, and only allowing him, after he has done his hard day's work, his liberty and his wings, are little less fallacious in their views of life and discipline, and run the risk of destroying two careers in place of shaping one. It was not the voice of worldly wisdom that said, "No man can serve two masters." There is a sort

* For June 1871.

of official life, it is true, which wears the energies of those concerned in it comparatively little. Still, supposing them strong enough not to be dwarfed and palsied by becoming machines at the expense of elasticity and hope, they have only the hours of relaxation left, for the fulfilment of the duties to which they were born, for the working out of the gifts with which they were gifted. Out of such a divided life, no painter, no musician, no architect can come. It might be held, without unjustifiable assumption, that authorship demands as much singleness of devotion as Art. Such devotion may imply something like the vow of poverty—but that consideration is beside the question; which has too seldom been stated in all its dignity and simplicity without expediency and without evasion.

I cannot take leave of this second collection of Miss Mitford's letters, without a few words of explanation due to the public—due to the publishers—last and least, due to myself.

That the work is not complete, is, perhaps, inevitable, however much to be regretted. Those who have hoarded letters from a distinguished person (themselves more or less distinguished as may be) are naturally inclined to self-assertion, when they are invited to contribute to a whole work the arrangement of which can only be entrusted to one hand. It must be stated, that many sets of Miss Mitford's

letters of indisputable interest have, on their being applied for, been refused by their holders, with intimation of their being reserved for separate publication. This may be good, or the reverse—inasmuch as these separate possessors have a wide and complete knowledge of every other store of correspondence, of those to whom such letters were written, and of all the allusions they contain. Failing this, there may be danger of false statements passing uncontradicted, of reiteration and mystification being perpetuated—calculated to weaken our interest in the letter-writer's powers. Such division and dilution (whatsoever be the cause) cannot but be regretted.—Owing to their influence, the biographies of Cowper and of Southey, [redacted]st inevitably remain incomplete for some quarter [redacted]a century to come. Then possibly some skilled hand may, from rival publications, or by aid of materials as well jealously or zealously kept back, combine such biographies as will fully do justice to the intrinsic variety and value of the authors treated.

As a last word, I may be permitted to notice a statement concerning myself, which I cannot permit to remain without its distinct contradiction. At the very instant of closing these volumes, I have been amazed by a passage in the Memoirs of Miss Mitford's old friend, executed by the Rev. J. A. L'Estrange. That gentleman sets forth, that I was invited to co-operate, with the Rev. Mr. Harness, in preparing for publication the first set of letters to which this second one is sequel, and that I declined on the score of insufficient remuneration. Among the many

mistakes, misprints, and misstatements made by Mr. L'Estrange in his literary attempts, there is none more flagrant than this. It has not the very slightest foundation in fact. No application of the kind was made to me; and, of course, no conditions by me were advanced, such as are stated by the assistant and biographer of Mr. Harness.

H. F. CHORLEY.

November 15th, 1871.

END OF VOL. II.

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